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Edited by  
COMPTON MACKENZIE

TELEPHONE: Regent 1383  
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## THE B.B.C.

By THE EDITOR

I DO not profess to understand what lies behind the present campaign of the popular press against the B.B.C. But I presume that, like most outbursts of moral indignation, it arises from jealousy. It is the duty of every reader of this paper to use any influence he may possess to combat the barbarian attack which has suddenly been launched all along the line. Here is a hee-haw from a jackass with exceptionally long ears who calls himself "A Listener" and whose brays are published on the chief page of the *Daily Mirror* of January 15th: "Instead of bright musical comedy selections that always appeal we are treated to an excess of the symphonic, and modern English composers have been crowded out by ancient Germans, Austrians, and Russians . . . If the B.B.C. can regain the intimate human touch it had when broadcasting began and make our evenings bright with English songs and melodies, instead of the excessively intricate compositions of ancient foreigners, a boom in wireless will come again."

Quite what a boom in wireless means I do not know, but I presume it means that a hundred thousand cretins like the author of this article will waste their money in buying new gadgets to deal with the selections from modern English musical comedy, which are to fill the ether when dance music is not being played. The action of the popular press in arming these criminal lunatics to help them in a campaign against the B.B.C. is, with the exception of the vile personal attack on Venizelos in 1922, the most cynical abuse of power in which it has hitherto indulged itself. The B.B.C. has had to contend with hostility on all sides and that at the present moment it is able to offer every day a programme of such remarkable variety, interest, and utility, must be regarded as an unqualified triumph. I have hardly ever read in the press a tribute to what it has achieved, outside, of course, the pages of the *Radio Times*, and even there the B.B.C. has shown itself extremely sparing of self-praise.

The present outcry seems chiefly directed against the quarter-of-an-hour talks. My own impulse is to turn off the wireless as soon as a talk begins, either because the speaker's voice annoys me or because his subject is tiresome. Yet, even so, I usually find two or three talks every week which thoroughly entertain me, and I very much question if I could find three articles in the daily papers to do as much. In the week before Christmas there was a talk by Louis Golding on "Christmas in the Tyrol." It was beautifully expressed and beautifully delivered. Unfortunately, about an hour later, when the minds of the listeners had been tuned in to peace and goodwill, a military gentleman was allowed to talk for a quarter-of-an-hour about weapons for killing people; but, after all, one was able to turn the military gentleman off. It is surely too much to expect that a couple of million listeners are going to be entertained every day, year in year out, by every speaker. I view with a certain amount of mistrust the concentration of all criticism in the hands, or should I say tongues, of a few. If one literary critic is to be given pontifical powers I would as soon that it were Mr. Desmond MacCarthy as anybody, and if one dramatic critic is to be chosen I cannot think of one who would fill the post more adequately than Mr. Agate. But there is an increasing tendency toward pluralism in critical benefices, and I deprecate strongly that Mr. Gerald Gould, to take a conspicuous example, should review novels in *The Observer* and the *Saturday Review* as himself and in another weekly under a pseudonym. Mr. Gould's opinion is as worth while having as any literary critic's, but it will be better worth having when he doesn't spread the butter of his praise over three slices of bread, or scatter the pepper of his blame over three platefuls of beef. Mr. Agate writes under his own name in the *Sunday Times* and wears his rue with a difference in *Eve*, where he masquerades as Sir Topaz; on top of that he is criticising the drama orally for the B.B.C. Mr. Percy Scholes, when he became musical adviser to the B.B.C., gave up writing for *The Observer*. I commend his self-denial to some of his confrères.

Mrs. Cran is always a pleasure to listen to on the subject of gardening, but she is becoming sadly unpractical, and if she thinks she is going to get rid of duckweed merely by emptying her pond she is misleading thousands of people. The fact is that all these talkers for the B.B.C. require a critical ear kept on them, and I am seriously thinking of starting a weekly paper which will devote itself to criticising the programmes of the preceding week.

I have heard one or two magnificent singers whose names are entirely unknown to me, and it seems unfair that they should not receive the praise to which they are entitled.

It may interest readers of THE GRAMOPHONE to know that the wireless set which I use at Jethou is a four-valve Marconi. Owing to my remoteness I am entirely free from the oscillator, and though on short wave-lengths Morse is often a nuisance, I am entirely free from it on the longer wave-lengths. I use an Amplion adapter, and with the new Wilson horn on my Balmain machine I get a really superb reproduction. The H.M.V. is much less successful, but this week—which, unfortunately, I have had to spend in bed—I fitted the Amplion to my table Orchorsol and really the result is marvellous. In fact, for some things it is better than the Balmain-cum-Wilson horn. I find Stuttgart one of the best European stations, and I heard there the other day a most delicious sonata of Mozart for 'cello and bassoon which I commend to the recorders' notice. The Paris stations are all pitiable, and how anybody who has listened to them has the impudence to criticise the B.B.C. I really do not know. Schenectady comes through well on my loud-speaker, but the programmes fill me with melancholy forebodings for the future of American civilisation.

The first description of a football match in progress was given on Saturday, January 15th, and I hope that it will only be the first of many, for a pleasanter way of spending an afternoon in bed than listening to a football match I cannot imagine. I couldn't help being very much amused by the different ideals of the two describers. One of them was determined that at all costs the section map of the Twickenham ground issued by B.B.C. should be utilised by listeners; the other forgot all about the map and communicated most successfully his own excitement. "Corbett has just collared Roberts. No, he hasn't, Roberts is away again," one describer would cry, and then with a solemn, almost a macabre relish, the other would add "In Section two." "That was a fine bit of play, wasn't it?" the interesting describer would ask excitably, and like a funeral bell there would come the reply "In Section four." At half time the interesting describer went off for a drink, which he deserved as much as the players deserved their slices of lemon, and the academic describer, having matters all his own way, indulged in some anti-diluvian humour of his own during the interval. During the second half either the interesting describer was beginning to tire, or else the other had had a couple of drinks without saying anything about it. At any rate, during the second half the sections were allowed to interfere far too much with the description of the play.

I suggest that for the next match a couple of describers of the same kind are used so that we shall get the effect of two excited spectators rather than of a heavily built uncle trying to suppress his nephew from time to time; and yet, I don't know, I think I should miss that avuncular voice

from what is far and away the best uncle the B.B.C. has ever hatched. Anyway, the experiment was an unqualified success. Perhaps if it were applied to cricket it might brighten the game; the most hardened professional might hesitate to stonewall if he knew that a describer was telling a couple of million listeners every time he failed to hit a ball hard.

Well, I hope that I am voicing the opinion of all our wireless readers when I say to the B.B.C. that we are watching with an immense disgust and a profound uneasiness the savage attacks upon it from all sides, that we hope it will pay no attention whatever to these Choctaw war-cries, and that we recognise with gratitude its high sense of responsibility and its unmistakable devotion to high ideals. *Floreat!*

#### A POSTSCRIPT ON OTHER MATTERS.

So much for the B.B.C. When I came up to London the other day I just missed the Berlioz Concert at the Albert Hall, which must have sounded as splendid at Jethou as the London Editor tells me it did in the Albert Hall itself. The production of the *Messe des Morts* by the B.B.C. is a thing which to my mind should compensate for at least three-quarters of the malevolent criticisms of B.B.C. programmes that might occur to idle destructive minds.

I left, at Jethou, a large bundle of orchestral records which the Polydor people were good enough to send to me for my opinion, and with these I hope to deal next month. All I will say now to those who want comparative estimates is that I advise them not to rush off and buy the *Fifth Symphony* records reviewed by "K. K." this month without hearing the Polydor version of the *Fifth* too. *Turandot* and Heinrich Schlusnus I leave to Mr. Klein to deal with, and beg to disagree with "C. M. C." about Fritz Soot, whom I find a charming tenor. *The Counterfeit* (surely *The Wraith* would be a nearer translation of *Der Doppelgänger*?) and *The Nut-tree* (66434) seems to me, apart from a certain hollowness in the upper register now and then, an ideal disc, which I commend to Mr. Walter de la Mare, who asked in our symposium for some quiet songs. This hollowness is absent from another Fritz Soot record of *The Trout* and *Der Musensohn* (62551), two delicious familiar songs of Schubert fitly sung. Lauritz Melchior requires no introduction to our readers, for we have him on Parlophone records, but I must call their attention to a very beautiful song, *Tonerra, An die Musik*, by Sjöberg, with the *Cäcilie* of Strauss, on Polydor 66440. I do not remember hearing before two pleasant songs, *Der Lenz* (Hildach-Dahn) and *Sechse, sieben oder acht* (Brüll-Jabokowski), sung by that sympathetic baritone, Theodor Scheidl (90004).

Now let me draw your attention to four Polydor

records of a Balalaika Orchestra, with a vocal quartet in the two former: 20591, *Stenka Rasin* (two parts); 20594, *Heida-Troika* and *Die Sonne wandert auf und nieder*; 20586, *Das Bächlein* and *Kasbek*; 90000, *Die Sehnsucht nach der Heimat* and *Kaufmann Uchar*—all of them folk songs. I enjoyed these better than all the rest of the large packet that the Polydor Company sent me. All four are worth buying, and all four give the maximum of pleasure that a record can give. However, as everybody won't be able to afford all of them I recommend as first choice *Stenka Rasin*. The soloist, a soprano with an exquisite tenderness and poignancy, is anonymous. She is probably an amateur, and occasionally sings a little sharp; but that doesn't matter any more than it matters when a boy's beautiful treble is occasionally a little sharp. I should certainly put the melody, which is an old folk song, amongst the best dozen melodies in the world I have heard. Do make a special note of this record, which will please everybody, from those with the most unsophisticated taste in music to the other extreme. Even the infamous idiots who are writing to the papers to beg for nothing but selections of modern English musical comedy might be touched by this ancient Russian music. If they are not, then the sooner they drop themselves off Hammersmith Bridge the better. Some of my readers may remember that *Troika* on an old Balalaika record issued by Columbia about ten years ago. It is one of the most stirring tunes there is. With the new recording *Troika* gets full justice done to it. The two records without voices have four splendid tunes which I really cannot choose between. It must not be forgotten that Columbia have been issuing Balalaika records with new methods, and I hope that they will remember one of their old records they called *In a dreamy garden* and *Oh Pity Me* for new recording. Vocalion has done *Kasbek* recently, and I remember de Groot's record of it, too. That is a gorgeous tune.

I shall be glad to receive from the Polydor Company all the Balalaika records they issue, because I know from experience how much pleasure they give to all classes of listeners, and, therefore, it gives me a very much greater pleasure to recommend them. It is a kind of music that seems to suit any mood, and is, therefore, ideal for the gramophone.

I commend a capital record by the Basilica Choir of *Gloria in Excelsis* and Mozart's *Ave Verum* (66436). Thanks to the new recording the treble soloist doesn't blast on his top notes in the lovely *Ave Verum* as he always used to do in the old H.M.V. record of the Westminster Choir, which was otherwise so good.

On Sunday, January 16th, I turned on the wireless just as Solloway was playing *The Wind*, by Von Vecsey. "That's very fine playing," I said;

"I wonder the gramophone hasn't got hold of him." An hour later I turned to my heap of Polydor records and found a disc by this very violinist playing that very tune (62557), 10 in., *Valse Bluette*, by Drigo, arr. Auer and *Caprice No. 1 (Le Vent)*, by von Vecsey. He certainly is a remarkable performer. He is a little too remarkable in his *Carmen Fantasia* (66441, 12 in., two parts), and I hope that he will not allow virtuosity to take control of his art altogether, for technique so amazing as his deserves to be employed only in the noblest fashion.

Of the February Columbias and H.M.V.'s, which arrived too late for the usual reviewers, I believe that Elgar's *Enigma Variations* (H.M.V., D1154-1157, in

album, 26s.) and the *Rienzi Overture* (Col. L1820, 1821, 13s.) are superb performances, and the Mozart *Concerto for bassoon and orchestra* (Col. L1824-6, 19s. 6d.) is not only an amazing piece of recording but is a complete defence against my friend Mr. Percy Scholes's impeachment of the saxophone. Anglican choirs and choir-masters will be thrilled by the Columbia records made in St. George's Chapel and Rochester Cathedral, but after the H.M.V. Mozart *Requiem* records they leave me cold. The two things which strike me most forcibly just now are the very high standard of all recording at present and the marked improvement in H.M.V. surface in the last few months.

COMPTON MACKENZIE.



## THE ROYAL OPERA SEASON

By HERMAN KLEIN

THE "promise of May" held out by the prospectus of the London Opera Syndicate, should warm the hearts of our opera-loving readers—a brand whereof my Editor declares that this journal possesses a large and growing proportion. I trust also that we can direct a quite special appeal to those with large pockets and rich friends in Society, who may have the means for subscribing to the pit-tier boxes at Covent Garden, the disposal of which, as we are assured, will involve either a debit or a credit balance at the end of the season. Personally, I should like to see the whole lot subscribed for, not only for the financial reason, but because the pit-tier was always in the old days, and can be still, the prettiest, the most sociable and ornamental, the most comfortable place for seeing and hearing well, in the whole house. Meanwhile it is good to know that applications for seats are coming in quickly; also to learn that the results last year showed such a substantial improvement.

The list of artists for the season of eight weeks, which opens on Monday, May 2nd, is already a strong one, and most of them are well known to readers of THE GRAMOPHONE as among the leading record-makers. They comprise (in alphabetical order) *inter alia* the following:—

*Sopranos*.—Katherine Arkandy, Maria Ivoguen, Maria Jeritza, Lotte Lehmann, Frida Leider, Goete Ljungberg, Delia Reinhardt, Elisabeth Schumann, Lotte Schöne and Helene Wildbrunn.

*Mezzo-Sopranos and Contraltos*.—Evelyn Arden, Maria Olszewska, and Sigrid Onegin.

*Tenors*.—Fernand Ansseau, Luigi Cilla, Hans Clemens, Karl Erb, Wilhelm Gombert, Fritz Krauss, Rudolf Laubenthal, Lauritz Melchior, John O'Sullivan, and Aureliano Pertile.

*Baritones and Basses*.—Paul Bender, Eduard Habich, Alexander Kipnis, Richard Mayr, Dennis Noble, Albert Reiss, Emil Schipper, Friedrich Schorr, and Mariano Stabile.

*Conductors*.—Vincenzo Bellezza, Robert Heger, Bruno Walter.

Apart from two cycles of the *Ring*, instead of one, the Wagnerian music-dramas will include *Parsifal* and *Tristan*, *Fidelio* will be revived to honour the centenary of Beethoven's death, Mozart's *Seraglio* remounted after a long interval, and *Der Rosenkavalier* again performed. The Italian *répertoire* is to be interesting, comprising as it will *Aida*, *Otello*, *Rigoletto*, *Il Trovatore* and *Tosca*; while the only novelty—an important one—will be Puccini's posthumous opera *Turandot*, the first records of which have just reached this country and are reviewed in an adjoining column.

Finally, I take especial pleasure in again drawing attention to the promised revival of *Les Huguenots*. The undeserved neglect of Meyerbeer, which I ventured to stress with emphasis in this journal more than a year ago, is at last to cease, and I am glad to see that this sensible move on the part of Lt.-Col. Blois and his co-directors has been warmly welcomed by Mr. Ernest Newman and other of my more prominent colleagues. The great thing is to mount the opera with first-rate singers and to have it carefully rehearsed, which will no doubt be done. Should a fine performance be the outcome, I have no fear whatever as to the verdict of the real lovers of opera. Their opinion in this matter will follow that of the present-day public in America, France, Germany, Austria—yes, and the Baltic States and Czechoslovakia!

## Records of *Turandot* (Puccini) and *La Forza del Destino* (Verdi)

- (i) **Marcia dei Ministri e Mandarini** from *Turandot* and **Battle-Music** and **Tarantella** from *La Forza del Destino*: The State Opera Orchestra of Dresden, conducted by Fritz Busch. Polydor 66430 (12in., 5s. 9d.).
- (ii) **In questa Reggia, or son mill' anni e mille** and **Del primo pianto si, straniero, quando sei giunto** from *Turandot*: Anne Roselle (soprano), in German. Polydor 73024 (12in., 6s. 9d.).
- (iii) **Terzetto dei Ministri** (Ping, Pang, Pong). Two parts, in German. Paul Schöffler, Heinrich Tessmer, Otto Sigmund, and Orchestra of the State Opera, Dresden, under Fritz Busch. Polydor 66429 (12in., 5s. 9d.).
- (iv) **Overture to *La Forza del Destino***: State Opera Orchestra, Dresden, conducted by Fritz Busch. Two parts. Polydor 66431 (12in., 5s. 9d.).

THE first records of Puccini's posthumous opera, *Turandot*, to be brought out in this country, are two double-sided twelve-inch discs issued this month by the Polydor Company. This opera was mounted at La Scala, Milan, in April last under Toscanini, and subsequently given with success in America, Austria, and Germany. At Dresden it was performed at the State Opera House under the direction of Fritz Busch, and it is from that source that we have the present admirable recordings. It is an extremely difficult work—by far the most elaborate of all Puccini's operas—and does not lend itself readily to the provision of gramophone excerpts. So much the greater credit to the Polydor executants, from the arranger downwards, for the ability with which these pieces have been selected, prepared, and performed. They will form a highly valuable guide for all who propose to hear *Turandot* at Covent Garden during the coming season of the London Opera Syndicate; while gramophonists generally who love their Puccini will rejoice at the possession of these new wonderful examples of his fertile inventive genius.

Having recently had opportunity for studying the handsome vocal score published by Ricordi, I am in a position to appreciate more readily the characteristic and grandiose features of this music—so often reminiscent of *Madam Butterfly*—in its illustration of the picturesque old Chinese legend. It consists for the greater part of ensembles, choruses, and orchestral work, both stately and bizarre, lively and severe, enhancing the pageantry or colouring the comedy and tragedy of the stage drama. There is not a single separate number in the opera, but its absence will not evoke complaint so long as one can get a large slice of vocal drama such as that presented here in Turandot's splendid exhortation to the conquering Prince when they meet in the second act (record 2).

This is, however, preceded and almost led up to by the *March of Ministers and Mandarins* in record 1, which in turn is preceded by the extraordinarily novel and exciting *Terzetto of the Ministers* (Ping, Pang, and Pong) given on record 3. The fact that they stand in inverse order in the opera matters not; they sound equally effective in any order. The so-called March accompanies the change of scene from the first to the second tableau of Act 2, and includes some choral fragments that are not

given in the record. It is genuine Eastern highly-coloured descriptive music, in the true Puccini vein, extremely well played by the Dresden Orchestra and very clearly recorded.

*Turandot's* address to the Prince, *In questa Reggia*, is perhaps the most exacting piece of declamation to be found in modern Italian music. It is in two parts and again the chorus is dispensed with. It has, I fancy, more dramatic than musical interest, but, whatever its effect in the opera, Anne Roselle (singing in German) does it abundant justice in this record. Her voice, albeit a trifle thin in quality, is a bright and telling soprano and the high notes, of which there are any quantity, come out clear and strong. By the way, I wonder how Jeritza will impress us in this long-sustained tirade.

I am not quite sure, of course, but I should not wonder if the *scherzando Gianni Schicchi*-like trio of the Masters of the Household, Ping, Pang, and Pong, proved to be the hit of the opera. It is certainly an amazing combination of quaint and rapid ejaculations, queer harmonies, and strange dissonances alternating with moments of reposeful beauty and absolute charm, the whole set off to the fullest advantage by varied and masterful orchestration. The three German artists sing it superbly, the baritone, Paul Schöffler, being especially fine; while here, again, the orchestral playing shows the Dresden conductor, Fritz Busch, to be a first-rate conductor. Altogether this Chinese puzzle of Puccini's comes out surprisingly well under the Polydor auspices.

I can only refer briefly to the selections from *La Forza del Destino*. It is rumoured that Verdi's mid-period opera is only just "catching on" in Germany after all these years; hence, I imagine, this very careful and adequate issue of the hitherto neglected *Overture*, *Battle-Music*, and *Tarantella*. The former, on a separate two-part record, is representative of Verdi in a mood that reminds you alternatively of Meyerbeer and Auber, and very pleasantly at that; it is played with immense spirit and *verve*. The other two pieces, divided by a narrow space over which the needle must be lifted, occupy the reverse side of the disc containing the march from *Turandot* and, on the whole, leave one decidedly impressed by the greater interest of the clever *chinoiserie* invented by Puccini.

HERMAN KLEIN.

# The WAGNERIAN'S RECORD LIBRARY

By PETER LATHAM

## V.—Building up the Score

THE object of this article is to show what portions of Wagner's various works are available on the gramophone. Where several versions of an item are known to me I have naturally chosen the best for my list, but where only one is available I have always included it unless I have found it definitely bad. I have adopted a "starring" system as a rough guide to quality, and to discs of peculiar excellence I have affixed two asterisks; one asterisk against a title indicates that though not in the very first rank it is none the less a good record.

The earliest of Wagner's operas (in point of composition) to receive the compliment of gramophonic reproduction is *Rienzi*, of which H.M.V. gives us the *Overture* (D.607\*), complete on two sides, and *Adriano's Air* (from Act III.), also on two sides and slightly cut (D.B.756); the singer is Maartje Offers. Another number, *Rienzi's Prayer* (from Act V.), is sung by Melchior for Polydor (72870\*\*); it is contained on a single side and is backed by the *Prize Song*. These three discs make a very modest selection from a five-act opera, but I know of no others, and on the whole I doubt whether the public betrays sufficient interest in this early work to justify any great extension of the companies' repertoire.

*The Flying Dutchman* has been rather more generously treated. From Act I. we have: (1) the *Overture* (H.M.V., D.1056\*\*); (2) the *Steersman's Song*, the last vocal episode from Scene 1, of which Robert Hutt gives an adequate rendering on one side of Polydor 62350, though the orchestral support is weak; and finally (3) an excellent, double-sided, uncut record of *Die Frist ist um*, the Dutchman's great monologue at the beginning of Scene 2, sung in its entirety by Theodor Scheidl (Polydor 66414\*\*). The *Introduction to Act II.* and an orchestral version of the *Spinning Chorus* are on one side of Parlophone E.10335\* and there is also a choral record of the *Spinning Chorus* (H.M.V., D.585\*). Next comes Bettendorf's *Senta's Ballad* (Parlophone E.10080\*\*), but after this there is nothing till we approach the end of the act and reach the Dutchman's monologue, *Wie aus der Ferne* (sung by Friedrich Schorr on Polydor 65598\*\*) and the duet that follows it, *Versank ich jetzt* (Parlophone E.10182, \*\* Bettendorf and Engel; the portion omitted between the two sides will be found on one side of Parlophone E.10478\*\*). I have not met with any record from Act III.

*Tannhäuser* is responsible for legions of records. After the *Overture*, Columbia L.1770\*\*-1\*\*, and the *Venusberg Music*, H.M.V., D.1071\*\*-2\*\* (both of these items are complete) we have *Stets soll nur dir*, the third and last verse of Tannhäuser's song in praise of Venus, in Otto Wolf's rendering on one side of Polydor 65814. Another Polydor record, 13803, gives us Käte Herwig's interpretation of the *Shepherd's Song* at the beginning of Act I., Scene 3, and from this we pass straight on to the first *Pilgrims' Chorus* (H.M.V., D.1074\*). *Als du in kühnem Sange* (H.M.V., D.B.196, \*\* Battistini [in Italian], or Polydor 70644, \*\* Schlusnus [in German]) is the next recorded extract, and the last in Act I. At the beginning of Act II. come the various versions of *Dich, teure Halle*, to which I have referred in previous articles, followed after a break of only a few bars by Bettendorf and Melchior's record, Parlophone E.10332, \*\* giving the bulk of Scene 2. Nothing from the brief third scene has come my way, but in the fourth we get the *Grand March* (H.M.V., D.1101\*\*) Wolfram's song *Blick' ich umher*, H.M.V., D.B.199\*\* (Battistini), and then, considerably later on, *Elizabeth's Pleading*, Parlophone E.10219\*\* (Bettendorf). The only complete performance of the *Introduction to Act III.* is on the two sides of Parlophone E.10215,\* though some may prefer the truncated version on H.M.V., D.1072.\*\* The main elements of the first and second scenes can be constructed out of the *Pilgrims' Chorus*, H.M.V., D.1074,\* *Elizabeth's Prayer*, Parlophone E.10219\*\* (Bettendorf), or H.M.V., D.B.306\*\* (*Jeritza*); both these are slightly cut. And lastly there is the *Pilgrimage to Rome*, of which I prefer Melchior's rendering, Polydor 72863, \*\* though Mullings (Columbia L.1383), who sings it faster, manages to include more of the music than anybody else.

The *Prelude to Lohengrin* might well be re-recorded; the existing discs, H.M.V., D.129 and Polydor 65951, date from the pre-electric age, and though both are remarkably good for the time at which they were issued, yet this is a movement that calls for all the most modern improvements. Apart from the *Prelude* I have no record to add to my previous selections for Act I.; Parlophone 10351\*\* (*Elsa's Dream*), H.M.V., D.1101\*\* (*The Swan Chorus*), and Columbia L.1714\*\* (*The King's Prayer* and *Finale*) include between them everything that has been recorded. In Act II. we start with the *Ortrud-Telramund Duet*, sung by Olszewska and Schipa on three Polydor sides (78989\*-90\*), in

which nothing is omitted but five orchestral bars at the end of the first side, and from this we go almost straight on to *Elsa's Song to the Breezes* (second scene), which is found on the back of Bettendorf's *Elsa's Dream* (Parlophone E.10351\*\*), while at the end of this scene there is Vera Schwarz' *Du Armste kannst wohl nie ermessen* (Polydor 15990\*) wherein Elsa sings so innocently to Ortrud (Ortrud's "asides," by the way, are left out). After this we have only one other excerpt from the act, the *Wedding Procession Music* at the opening of the fourth scene (H.M.V., D.937\*\*). Act III. has received plenty of attention; there is the *Introduction* and *Bridal Chorus* on H.M.V., D.1054,\*\* followed immediately by the *Love Duet* (H.M.V., D.931\*\*); then after a small break comes *Höchstes Vertrau'n* (I am inclined to recommend Robert Hutt's version of this, Polydor 65485\*), while towards the end of the opera Hislop sings the *Narration* on H.M.V., D.B.681\*\* and Max Hirzel the *Farewell* on the back of Bettendorf's *Dich, teure Halle* (Parlophone E.10372\*\*).

Many readers of THE GRAMOPHONE have their own ideas about the reconstruction of *The Ring*; in making my own I have had no other object than that of including as much as possible of the printed score. For the *Prelude to The Rhinegold* I must obviously go to H.M.V., D.1088,\*\* and after that there are Parlophone E.10432\*\* (*The Rhinemaidens' Song*) and H.M.V., D.677\* (*Alberich steals the gold*), which contain between them a fair proportion of the first scene and the beginning of the second. On the back of H.M.V., D.677\* is the *Descent to Nibelheim*, but from this point onwards there is only *Erda's Warning* (Sigrid Onegin, Polydor 72692) in the fourth scene before we reach the *Entrance of the Gods* (H.M.V., D.1117\*\*) and the end of the opera.

H.M.V., D.678 gives the first ninety-six bars of the *Prelude to The Valkyrie*, skips about seven pages (of vocal score), and then plays about forty bars more; the second side opens some dozen bars after the beginning of the third scene and runs to the end of Siegmund's monologue. About thirty bars later comes *Die Männer Sippe* (Polydor 65677, Lilly Halgren-Dinkela), and from this point we can complete the *Act*, using H.M.V., D.679\* (first side), Polydor 72934\*\* (both sides), and H.M.V., D.679\* (second side), in that order. There is one trifling cut on the last side, otherwise the only disadvantage (not a very great one) is that Tudor Davies sings in English for H.M.V., Leider and Melchior in German for Polydor. I have alluded in a previous article to H.M.V., D.680,\*\* in which Austral and Radford sing *Brünnhilde's Battle-cry* and *Wotan warns Brünnhilde not to disobey*; these two sides include everything that has been recorded in Act II. till we get to H.M.V., D.681\*, *Brünnhilde foretells Siegmund's death* (Austral and Tudor Davies), a rendering of the first thirty-four bars and the last seven

pages of the fourth scene, and Polydor 62446, *Zauberfest bezähmt ein Schlaf* (Fritz Soot) with the early part of the fifth scene. The *Ride of the Valkyries* (Act III.) is on H.M.V., D.1088,\*\* and then there occurs a long unrecorded stretch; it is only after the tumult has died down and Sieglinde has sung her *Nicht sehre dich Sorge* that H.M.V. steps in again with *Brünnhilde gives Sieglinde the broken sword* (D.682\*)—the first words are Sieglinde's *Rette mich Kühne*—but now this disc and its successor, D.929,\*\* complete the scene with only short omissions up to the final departure of the Valkyries. I rather wish we could have a record covering the early part of the third scene—there are some fine things in this; but as things are we have to wait for Brünnhilde's *Du zeugtest ein edles Geschlecht* (H.M.V., D.682, Austral and Radford). This disc, called *Brünnhilde implores the protection of fire*, has a short cut in the middle, but otherwise it covers the ground up to the beginning of *Wotan's Farewell*, for which and for the *Fire Music* I have already recommended Whitehill's version on H.M.V., D.B.440\*\* and D.B.439.\*\*

*Auf wolkigen Höh'n* (Polydor 62354, Theodor Scheidl), the Wanderer's answer to Mime's last question in that curious second scene, is the first *Siegfried* record known to me, and the only one from Act I., except for the much-recorded *Forging Song*, of which I select Melchior's double-sided version (Polydor 72857\*\*). The same singer helps us through the early part of the *Forest Music* on Parlophone E.10442\*\* (two sides), after which we return to H.M.V. (D.700) for *Mime's treachery* (this starts where Siegfried comes from the cave with the Tarnhelm and the Ring, but stops some distance short of Mime's final discomfiture and death). H.M.V., D.701,\*\* *Siegfried follows the forest bird*, supplies the end of this Act, and those who want more *Forest Murmurs* may perhaps disentangle some from one of the *pot-pourris*, H.M.V., D.561 or Parlophone E.10156. In Act III. H.M.V. have things all their own way; D.B.441\*\* gives the *Introduction* and *Wotan invokes Erda* (Whitehill); on the back of this *Siegfried ascends the Valkyries' Rock* (Whitehill and Tudor Davies); on D.701\*\* *Brünnhilde hails the radiant sun* (Austral and Tudor Davies), while D.702\*\* contains *Brünnhilde recalls her Valkyrie days* and the *Finale of the Opera* (Austral and Tudor Davies once more). I must, however, remind readers of two Polydor records of *Ewig war ich*, one by Helene Wildbrunn (72684\*\*) and one by Frida Leider (72977\*\*).

It is to H.M.V. again that we must look for most of our extracts from *The Dusk of the Gods*. D.1080\*\* gives us the *Dawn* following the disappearance of the Norns, but this is made to lead on immediately to the *Journey to the Rhine*, whereas the *Duet* between *Brünnhilde and Siegfried* (D.703,\*\* Austral and Tudor Davies) should properly come in between.

Radford joins Tudor Davies in D.704,\*\* *Gunther and Gutrune welcome Siegfried*, and has the honours to himself on the other side of the disc in *Hagen meditates revenge*. In *Hagen summons the vassals* (Act II., scene 3) he has the assistance of a chorus (D.930\*\*), but before this last disc comes a Polydor record, Olszewska's version of a double-sided continuous extract from the Waltraute scene in Act I. (Polydor 72982); this is wrongly labelled: the first words are not *Höre mit Sinn* (as indicated), but *Seiter von dir* from the next sentence; Olszewska carries us to *Ende der Ewigen Qual*. H.M.V., D.705\* is the best I can do for Act III., Scene 1—a poor best as there are no voices—and then we have recourse once more to Polydor (72831,\* Curt Taucher) for *Siegfried's Story* (the title is in German on the label), the episode immediately preceding his murder by Hagen. Otto Wolf sings the hero's melodious last words (*Siegfried's Tod*, Polydor 65696\*), and H.M.V. comes in again at the finish with the *Death March* (D.1092\*\*) and Austral's fine performance of the *Closing Scene* (D.705\*\*-6\*\*).

At the risk of incurring an accusation of partiality I must continue my recommendations of H.M.V. throughout the first half of *Tristan*; I have indeed no alternative, for now that this company has produced a really first-rate *Prelude* (D.1107\*\*) they have established a superiority at the only place where the ground is disputed. Their *Isolde's Narration* and *Isolde's Curse* (D.911\*), *They drink the potion* and *Tristan! Isolde!* (D.912\*), and their two records of the *Love Duet* (D.736\* and D.737\*\*) are, so far as I am aware, the only reproductions of this music apart from one short extract, *Brangäne's Warning* (included in the H.M.V. *Love Duet*), which has been done twice by Polydor as a separate item (70709, Emmi Leisner, and 72692, Sigrid Onegin). But I am most grateful to Polydor for the valuable assistance they afford towards the end of Act II. with Marke's monologue (sung by Theodor Lattermann on the two sides of 65725\*; it is complete except for thirty-five bars that are omitted near the end) and *Wohin nun Tristan scheidet* (65643,\*\* Richard Schubert). H.M.V., D.542 is perhaps the best record of the *Introduction to Act III*.—all the versions I know are horribly mutilated—but Polydor come in again with *Tristan's Vision*, Otto Wolf's rendering on 65695\* being on the whole more satisfactory than the orchestral version, Columbia L.1551,\*\* which I selected in a previous article on account of the *Good Friday Music* that backs it. After this there is nothing but the *Liebestod* (Polydor 65627,\*\* Frida Leider).

*The Mastersingers* is the best loved of all Wagner's operas if the number of records that have sprung from it can be taken as a fair indication of its popularity. Here again H.M.V. play the predominant part, and I have no hesitation in choosing D.590\*\* (the *Overture*), D.745\*\* (the *Church scene*

and *Walther meets Eva and Magdalene*), D.746\* (*David and the Apprentices* and *Entrance of the Mastersingers*; both these contain cuts), D.747\*\* (*Pogner's Address* and *By Silent Hearth*), D.748 (*Kothner announces the Mastersinger's rules* and *Now begin!*), D.749 (*Walther's Song displeases the Masters* and [Act II.] *The Apprentices celebrate Midsummer's day*), and D.750\*\* (*The Elder's Scent*). In this last number, however, Polydor 65671\*\* (Friedrich Schorr) runs the H.M.V. disc very close, in spite of a small cut, and for the *Duet, Sachs and Eva*, my vote goes to Parlophone E.10443\*\* (a complete extract by Bettendorf and Jerger). I return to H.M.V. for *Walther resents the Masters' injustice* and *Sachs cobbles and sings* (D.751), though this last item is not free from cuts and the opening bars are taken from a point considerably later in the Act than the rest of the disc; and the same firm supplies *Beckmesser's Serenade arouses the townspeople* and the *Introduction to Act III*. (D.752\*). The charming little scene between *Sachs and David* is recorded complete on the two sides of a ten-inch Polydor record (61848, Friedrich Plaschke and Waldemar Henke) and is succeeded immediately by *Wahn! Wahn!* (Polydor 85280,\* Michael Bohnen). Polydor 85304 (Krauss and Bohnen) contains the whole of the *Walther-Sachs Dialogue* up to (but not including) the first appearance of the *Prize-Song*. Next follows the scene between *Sachs and Beckmesser*, compressed on to the two sides of H.M.V., D.754,\*\* and then, after only a small break, *Sachs recognises Eva's love for Walther* (with two cuts) and *Sachs bestows his blessing* (H.M.V., D.755\*). This actually overlaps *Ein kind war hier geboren* (Polydor 85274, Bohnen) which carries us on to connect up with the *Quintet* (H.M.V., D.756\*\*). And now, after fifteen mute, inglorious bars, come H.M.V., D.756\*\* (*Orchestral Interlude and Procession of the Guilds*) and H.M.V., D.757,\*\* containing an unbroken record of the music to within a page or two of *The Townspeople acclaim their idol—Sachs* which is on the other side of H.M.V., D.757.\*\* Immediately following this we find *Euch macht Ihr's leicht* (Polydor 85273, Bohnen), but from this point we have to forego perfect continuity and content ourselves with the *Prize Song* and *Sachs' Panegyric* (H.M.V., D.1021\*\*). As is evident from this list by far the greater part of the third Act has been recorded—and well recorded, too.

For *Parsifal* I suggest starting with the Columbia *Prelude* (L.1744\*\*-5\*\*) and passing on to L.1628 (*Titurel the hero pure*, Norman Allin), this being a compressed version of Gurnemanz' narrative that precedes the sudden irruption of Parsifal. Next I go to the familiar H.M.V. series for D.1026\*\* (*Killing of the Swan*), back to Columbia for the *Transformation Scene* (L.1745\*\*), and to H.M.V. again (D.1027) for *The Knights of the Grail assemble* (on the other side of this there is a short passage that

fits in before the beginning of the Columbia *Transformation Scene*). After this we complete Act I. as far as we can with *Amfortas' Lament* and the three records of the *Grail Scene* (H.M.V., D.1028\*-9\*\*); but I cannot refrain from alluding to Rehkemper's excellent singing of a fragment from *Amfortas' Lament* on Polydor 65701\*\*; if, as I suspect, there is another record by the same artist covering the earlier part of the *Lament* (I have not come across it, but that proves nothing), then the H.M.V. disc may have to look to its laurels. A snippet from the *Introduction to Act II.* may be found at the beginning of L.1476 (Columbia), but for the *Flower-Maidens' Scene* I prefer the complete version with the voices on Parlophone E.10477\*\*-8\*\* (three sides). Very soon after the end of this we reach the *Herzeleide* (Polydor 72977, \*\* Frida Leider), and then, skipping a few pages, Melchior's double-sided *Amfortas! die Wunde!* (Parlophone E.10298\*\*). *Kundry's Curse* (H.M.V., D.B.862, \* Ljungberg) describes the events leading to Kundry's being laid under a curse, and is the last selection we have from Act II. From Act III. there is the *Good Friday Music*, Columbia L.1550\*\*-1\*\* (those who prefer a vocal rendering will find one by Alfred Jerger on Polydor 65650\*; unfortunately it is only a fragment). There now only remains Whitehill's *Mein Vater!* (H.M.V., D.B.439\*\*) and Melchior's *Nur eine Waffe taugt* (Parlophone E.10352\*\*), both of which have been mentioned in previous articles.

For the sake of completeness I add that the whole of the *Siegfried Idyll* will be found on Vocalion K.05157\*\*-8\*\*, and the song *Träume* (sung by Bettendorf) on Parlophone E.10495.\*\* I have an idea that there is also a record of *Im Treibhaus*, and I am sure that I have heard one of the *Faust Overture*, but I have failed to run these discs to earth. The somewhat blatant *Homage March* has been played in a band arrangement by the Coldstream Guards' Band on H.M.V., C.1166.

In an endeavour to economise space I have been chary of score references; where these have been given in one of my previous articles I have been content to mention a title only, omitting in some cases even the names of the artists which will also be found in the earlier essays; and I have followed the same plan with certain other discs—the familiar H.M.V.'s, for example—for which all the sign-posts have been set up long ago. But if anybody wants references for any one of the records I have referred to I will try to supply them if he will write and ask me.

I should also like to point out that I have made no attempt to preserve the same language throughout an opera, but have been quite impartial in selecting German, English, and even Italian renderings, referring each one to the sole criterion of musical excellence. Once or twice, indeed, I have actually fallen back on orchestral versions of

extracts in which voices should play a part, where no adequate vocal performance was available.

I have already more than once abjured any claim to a complete and exhaustive knowledge of the existing Wagner records. Wherever in the above list I assert that certain passages are not to be found in the gramophone's *repertoire* the reader must clearly understand that I speak only of the *repertoire as I know it*. I have preferred to trust to the common-sense of gramophiles in this matter rather than repeat *ad nauseam* "as far as I know." As a matter of fact I am well aware that there are gaps in my list, and anyone who can fill one of these will be doing a favour to us all if he will write to THE GRAMOPHONE or to me about it. Indeed the catalogue I have given, consisting as it does very largely of a wearisome succession of familiar records, can have little value except as a basis of common knowledge which the experts can supplement with their own more complete information.

On the other hand actual *lacunæ* undoubtedly do exist in the work of the recording companies. Many of them we need not deeply regret, but others are more important, and if we can direct attention to one or two of them I shall not have written on Wagner in vain. Will those who want the companies to attack parts of the scores at present unrecorded please write and make their wishes known? I will lead the way; I want a double-sided twelve-inch disc of the *Rhinemaids' Scene* in the *Dusk of the Gods* (with voices), a complete record of the *Introduction to Act III.* of *Tristan* (if this can't be crammed into a twelve-inch disc perhaps a double-sided ten-inch would do it), and at least one double-sided twelve-inch of the episode from the same act that begins where the ship is first sighted and ends with Tristan's death (we might indeed have all this bit). These are what I want most; I ask no more lest the heaviness of my demands should defeat my ends. And now, who follows? Who else has a suggestion to make? Let him stand and deliver!

P.S.—Since writing the above I have managed to hear some half dozen more of the most recent Wagner records. All of these have been reviewed in the last few numbers of THE GRAMOPHONE in the ordinary course of things, so I need only refer to those which affect the lists I have compiled. The new H.M.V. *Tannhäuser Overture* (D.1138-9), conducted by Coates, is an excellent performance, and I must give a special word of praise to the work of the strings; the violins, indeed, are apt to be a little too strong at times—even the brass has to make an effort to compete with them—but the violas are first-rate in the difficult *Venusberg* section. Coates takes the music rather faster than Sir Henry Wood (in the Columbia version); I am not sure that this is an advantage, but it certainly gives him an extra side at the end on which he has recorded the *Dance of the Apprentices* (from *The Mastersingers*),

giving us an ample, well-recorded selection, but no voices. There is a fine piece of singing and recording on Parlophone E.10515, in which Bettendorf and Melchior combine in a double-sided uncut extract from the love scene in *Lohengrin* (Act III, scene 2). But, though good, it is not quite all I had hoped; I have heard Bettendorf in better voice and Melchior seems once or twice to have sacrificed beauty of line for the sake of an effect, as when in the phrase "des Himmels Seligkeit" he makes a break after "Himmels" in order to achieve an unwanted though beautiful *pianissimo* on "Seligkeit." A single-sided excerpt from the same scene is on H.M.V., D.B.895. This is one of the Sobinoff discs discussed by Mr. Nadejin in the October GRAMOPHONE; on the other side of it Sobinoff sings *Lohengrin's Farewell* (not the *Farewell to the Swan*, as the label suggests), and in the duet his partner is A. Neshdanova. The record was made, Mr. Nadejin tells us, in 1910, and is astonishingly good for that antediluvian epoch (the modern machine is responsible, I fancy, for a good deal of improvement in the effect), besides being an interesting *souvenir* of a great voice we are not likely to

hear again. But it is idle to pretend that it can compare on its merits as a record with good modern work; nor do I personally find the Russian language and the Russian manner congenial to Wagner—however appropriate it may be for Moussorgsky. Lastly there is the duet from *The Valkyrie* on the two sides of H.M.V., D.B.963. This covers the same ground as Polydor 72934 (Frida Leider and Melchior) and fills the gap between the two sides of H.M.V., D.679. In the matter of orchestral reproduction it leaves the Polydor disc at the post, and Walter Widdop (the Siegmund) is making such good and rapid progress as a Wagnerian artist that I feel he may have a great future before him. But with all his merits he has not yet either the voice or the experience to sing this scene as Melchior sings it, and his Sieglinde (Göta Ljungberg), though much more than merely capable, just lacks the warmth that thrills us in Frida Leider's interpretation of the part. To those, therefore, that want the best singing I still recommend the Polydor record, but those who care more for *ensemble* will go to H.M.V.

PETER LATHAM.



## Book Reviews

**SCHUBERT—1. THE SYMPHONIES.** By A. Brent Smith. (Oxford University Press, 1s. 6d. net.)

**TONALITY.** By John L. Dunk. (Published by the Author, 13s. 6d. net.)

**MONTEVERDI.** By Dr. Henry Prunières. (Dent, 10s. 6d. net.)

For the ordinary listener the latest of the Musical Pilgrim series is undoubtedly the most useful of these three books. It deals only with the great *Symphony in C major* and the *Unfinished Symphony*, upon which wonderful works Mr. Brent Smith's remarks are commendably clear, brisk, and helpful. Perhaps we may hope for a complete recording of the *C major* one of these days! At present there is only the Polydor recording of the slow movement. Mr. Brent Smith's analogies are not always very carefully thought out. Who will agree that the *symphony* (*C major*) has "moods of melancholy bearing the same relation to the work as a whole as the sorrows of Mrs. Bardell or Mr. Alfred Jingle bear to the 'Pickwick Papers'" or that "compared with the music of Bach, Schubert's music is like a rough chalk drawing by Michael Angelo compared with the perfectly finished pictures of Andrea del Sarto"? This is almost ludicrously inept. However, these are small blemishes on a much needed and delightful book, which one hopes will be followed by two more dealing with the chamber music and the songs.

Mr. Dunk calls his book an elementary survey which leads one to wonder what an advanced survey may be like! His literary style is excellent and his book ought to be enthusiastically welcomed by the Expert Committee.

Dr. Prunières' scholarly study is for the specialist. It was a book that wanted writing. We pay lip service to the first great musical revolutionary, but know little of his work or environment. While his music may make little appeal to-day—is it really possible to be deeply moved by *Orfeo*?—his innovations and his manner of coming at them are very fascinating to read about and the musical examples to study and play through.

N. P.

## Golden Petmecky Needles

Our Expert Committee report:—

We have recently subjected the new Golden Petmecky needle to a fairly exhaustive test. The needle, which is of the flat arrow-shaped type, is similar in size and thickness to its well-known steel brother. The gold treatment to which the needle has been subjected undoubtedly tends to produce a smoother finish than can be achieved by ordinary burnishing. Though said to be capable of playing ten records, presumably without detriment to the records, we have not so dared to treat our favourites, but we are inclined to think that, thanks to the plating, this needle should do less damage than usual if unduly worked.

The volume is large, and can be modulated to various degrees of strength by placing the needle at any angle between the loud position—i.e., with the flat portion at right angles to the face of the sound-box—and the soft position with the flat parallel to the face. The tone is good and more mellow than that usually associated with steel needles.

Gramophonists should see, when using this type of needle, that the flattened portion is clear of the needle holder as otherwise imperfect contact may lead to buzz or rattle between the shoulders of the needle and the needle grip.

# THE GRAMOPHONE AND THE SINGER

(Continued)

By HERMAN KLEIN

## The Singing of Lieder—II.

AM glad to find that my promise of a series of articles on *Lieder* has met with general acceptance. The subject evidently interests those who feel, as I do, that the appreciation of good music entails the study, or at least the effort to understand, every class of composition (vocal or instrumental) that comes within the highest category of this art. In using this distinction I cast no slur upon music of less exalted types; how could I, when they include so much that we all love and admire? Yet the lower levels have had to be reached from those which lie lower still, or even from the rock-bottom of sheer musical ignorance; and if the taste of the humble but earnest and industrious amateur can be gradually trained to understand and enjoy better things, surely there is no reasonable ground for limiting at any stage the progress of that growth. Would the gramophone companies have believed me if I had told them twenty years ago that in 1927 they would be selling electrically-recorded discs of quartets and trios, sonatas, symphonies, and the like by the hundred and the thousand every week?

I ask this of them now because I venture to predict, without fear of losing my reputation as a prophet, that the time is near at hand when they are going to do similar trade with *Lieder*. My sole stipulation (in case this prediction of mine should ever be brought up as evidence against me) is that the songs shall be wisely chosen and that they shall be recorded only by the best obtainable singers. By the "best" I mean not only those with the finest voices, but with the particular gifts that are most suitable for the true and correct interpretation of the piece. How often have I found the rendering of certain *Lieder* completely spoiled because the artist, with the blindness due to the natural vanity that afflicts the majority of the race, has not possessed either the voice or the style or the temperament that was indispensable to the composition. This sort of adequate performance, intelligent but indistinguished, musical but not in the slightest degree inspired, electric in the mechanical sense but no other, will never result in making a record popular or help to sell it for the simple pleasure of listening to it. For this reason it will be wisest to "go slow"; to see that the singer knows how to make his or her selection; not to fix upon the piece until the artist is available who can do it justice. In this way I feel convinced we shall soon be offering incontestable proof that we have first-rate *Lieder*

singers of our own in this country. Meanwhile, I am going to give a glance at what has so far been done.

I begin with Schubert because he was the first of the great *Lieder* writers. When Beethoven lay on his death-bed and Schubert was just thirty, a volume of his songs was placed in the master's hands. He expressed the utmost admiration and astonishment at their exceeding beauty, then added: "Truly, Schubert possesses a spark of the Divine fire; some day he will make a noise in the world!" Well, he lived and died a poor man, but his "noise" included hundreds of beautiful songs which will live for ever. It is related that his friend, Johann Vogl, thought he wrote whilst in a state of clairvoyance and confirmed his theory by the following incident: "Among some songs recently composed was one to which Vogl took a special fancy, but finding it too high for him he had a copy written in a lower key. A fortnight later he tried over the song in Schubert's presence and the composer exclaimed, 'H'm! Pretty good song. Who wrote it?' He composed so much that he had not recognised his own handiwork. He was, after Mozart, the greatest master of melody that ever lived, and he knew to perfection the art of writing for the voice. Poetry lay deep in his soul, and his gift for expressing it was so stupendous that he conveyed the poetic idea as eloquently in his accompaniment as in the voice-part. Hence it was that every note of his songs helped to 'tell the story.'

Taking the original German titles in their alphabetical order, we make a start with *An die Musik* (Elena Gerhardt, Vocalion A.0220), and a very good beginning too, for there is an individual beauty both in the song and the rendering that makes one very glad to be listening to it. Just a tinge of nervousness it may be that is responsible for the over-pressure of breath which causes a slight trembling in the tone; but it does not prevent one's enjoyment of the familiar Gerhardt quality and phrasing in this sublime melody. It comes out clear and well-defined, with faultless intonation, in an excellent piece of recording. (On the reverse side of *An die Musik* is another song, which I shall mention in its proper place, putting an asterisk against the name or number to show it has been quoted already. The name of the singer will generally indicate pretty accurately the type of voice for which the song was written—high, medium, or low; but nearly all of

Schubert's favourite songs are to be had in transposed keys.) By the way, *An die Musik* was composed exactly a hundred years ago, to words by Schubert's steadfast friend, Franz von Schober, who wrote the libretto of his opera, *Alfonso und Estrella*.

*Der Atlas* (Leo Slezák, Polydor, 62422) belongs to the set of 14 songs known as the *Schwanengesang* (swan-songs), written in August, 1828, three months before he died. The poem, by Heine, illustrates the sufferings of Atlas, the Mauritanian king, who was fabled to have supported the world upon his shoulders. The music gives wonderful realism to the idea, the heavy bass octaves toiling heavily under the *tremolando* chords of the treble; while the singer, although a tenor, imparts just the right sense of weariness and semi-exhaustion, even pitying himself because he has to bear all the sorrows of the world. To lend this clever bit of drawing greater force, Slezák has on the other side done an exquisitely delicate rendering of \**Der Neugierige* (No. 6 of the *Schöne Müllerin* cycle of twenty songs, composed in 1823 to words by Wilhelm Müllér), the inquirer who asks the brooklet whether his sweetheart truly loves him. The comparatively "white" tone and the soft *cantilena* enhance the contrast, and, even though the singer's German vowels be not over pure, the general effect is undeniably delicious.

The dainty ballad, *Auf dem Wasser zu singen* appears in two catalogues. Written in 1823 to the words of Count Leopold von Stollberg, its flowing semiquaver accompaniment suggests the sound of the gurgling water as the boat floats past it towards the setting sun; while the singer depicts the colour and feeling of the picture with equal grace of rhythm. The rendering of Elena Gerhardt, with Paula Hegner at the piano (H.M.V., D.B.916), is remarkable for its lightness and delicacy, both as regards the even smoothness of the "slurred notes" and the easy flow of the German words. She also lends it variety by the *rubato* at the beginning of certain bars, albeit the pause on the first note is occasionally over-accentuated and compels her to hurry the remainder. The same device is adopted by Olga Haley (Vocalion, K.05122), though with a still more marked dwelling on the note and a misplaced slur that somewhat spoils the rhythm. Still, all credit is due to the English vocalist for the neatness of her phrasing and style and the purity of her tone.

Miss Haley also gives a good account (Voc. K.05257) among many others of the famous *Ave Maria*, which Schubert set to a German translation of the verses in Walter Scott's *Lady of the Lake*. The style here is duly prayerful and the voice sounds sympathetic. Both are happily free from the interference of *obbligatos* for violin or harp, or both, which disfigure the records of Claire Dux (Brunswick Clifto, 10249A), of Emmy Bettendorf (Parlo-

E.10205), and of John McCormack (H.M.V., D.B.578). Why this should have been thought necessary I cannot imagine—as if the melody and the singer did not suffice without such meretricious additions, which really amount to a vandalism. When such artists as those named are allowed to make their voices audible, amidst the din of the instrumental flourishes (there is a Müstel organ poking its nose in in the Bettendorf), these records are satisfactory enough. Claire Dux is always artistic; Emmy Bettendorf always attaining sensuous beauty even when she, as here, overdoes the pathos; and McCormack always sweet and tuneful, especially in enunciating the original English text. (The others are all sung to the German.) But I prefer to any of the above group the examples provided by Elisabeth van Endert (Poly. 13277) and Julia Culp (Poly. 70531), or even the contralto version by Emmy Leisner (Poly. 72838), not only because they give you (like Olga Haley's, I admit) the *Ave Maria* "pure and undefiled," as Schubert wrote it, but because they contain the best singing. The pick of the whole bunch is the Julia Culp, against which I have written—"rich mezzo-soprano like a clarinet; the voice admirably sustained; singularly clean phrasing; grief and penitence without profound or abject misery."

*Du bist die Ruh'* belongs to 1823, the *Schöne Müllerin* year, and is an exquisite song. It depicts the wonderful peace and joy that a woman's loving presence and care can instil into the grief-worn heart. Its beauty is matched by its absolute simplicity. The three records received of this, all in German, are utterly different in character: Eric Marshall (H.M.V., D.1055), the essence of lassitude, tearful, sob-stricken, and vocally thin; John McCormack (H.M.V., D.B.766) the soul of happiness and contentment, lively and tender by turns, charmingly sung; and Leo Slezák (Poly. 65774), manly, full of deep, strong feeling, particularly well varied in treatment and therefore interesting. After saying which, I leave the choice between the three to the reader.

That immortal song, *Der Erl-König*, composed to Goethe's words in 1816, passed through more than one version before its final completion, but I believe the final one is preserved in the State Library in Berlin. It is Schubert's masterpiece in the *Lied* form, as perfect in its way as Mozart's "Das Veilchen," and as vivid a setting of a legendary story as is the other of a dainty allegory. It is because the *Erl-König* presents a whole drama in three minutes, with a narrator and three characters for its *dramatis personæ*, that it is so hard to sing and interpret adequately. It is hard to accompany well because the rattle of triplets is as rapid and uninterrupted as that of the horse's feet. To make the picture complete each voice must sound like that of a different person, and this is what so

many singers strive in vain to accomplish. In the four attempts before me each sensibly uses his or her own language as being the easiest, but not one is absolutely convincing as a piece of characterisation, so I will not pursue that point further. The most successful of the four, anyhow, is Elena Gerhardt, who has the advantage in this case of being a German. Her record (Voc. A.0215) reveals exceptionally clear, strong tone and distinct enunciation, with a tempo at top speed and a singularly good accompaniment. The ending, "In seinen Armen das Kind war *tot*!" is splendid. Muriel Brunskill (Col. 9088) is very dramatic, her voice resonant, her diction easy to follow. Roy Henderson's (Voc. 05167) I have noticed before; it has many admirable features—tonal especially—to recommend it. Robert Radford's (H.M.V., D.257) has considerable variety, plenty of dramatic impulse, and a good sense of contrast. I certainly like it best of the English group.

*Die Forelle* (Schubert's poem, 1818) is celebrated for its sprightly accompaniment, suggesting the sudden flash of the hungry trout as he leaps out of the stream into the sunlight or darts hither and thither beneath the surface. The singer tells how the fish gets caught, and the little scene seems enacted before our eyes. Crisp, neat singing is required here and a strong rhythm. Elisabeth van Endert (Poly. 14673) gives both, together with a pretty tone and delicate *staccato*, and also with lots of *rubato* for those who like it. Olga Haley (Voc. X.9528) treats it in much the same fashion, though with a heavier, more abrupt *staccato*; she takes no liberties, however, and the spirit of the *lied* is manifestly there—in good German, too. In an exactly opposite mood is the setting of Mayrhofen's tragic verses entitled *Freiwilliges Versinken* (1820), sung with fitting dignity and feeling by the gifted contralto, Sigrid Onegin (Poly. 72921), who, I am glad to see, is to be heard at Covent Garden this season. This song is not familiar to many, and the awkward intervals make it difficult; but the artist overcomes them with ease, and the timbre of her fine voice enables her to realise every passage with dignity and a certain grandeur. The tremendously long pause on the C natural on the second "Wohin" makes a very weird effect in what is a generally fine record.

The masterly setting of the *Gretchen am Spinnrade* (or, as we say, "Marguerite at the Spinning Wheel") from Goethe's *Faust* belongs to the year 1814. It deals with the later period of the girl's unhappy existence and her reflection on the lover of bygone days. Elena Gerhardt, accompanied by her friend Paula Hegner (\*H.M.V., D.B.916), takes it unusually fast and the whirring wheel positively tears round. There is something very dramatic and touching, however, in her agitated, breathless sentences and the intense yearning that they express.

Olga Haley (Voc. K.05257) sings it less hurriedly and in a lower key (B flat minor), using a dark tone which only gathers strength in the two climaxes. An artistic rendering, nevertheless.

*Heidenröslein* (literally "Little Heather-rose") was composed in Schubert's most prolific *Lieder*-year,† 1815, to words by Goethe. It is a gem of daintiness and grace, requiring none of those "aids to beauty" that are associated usually with fading charms. Imagine, then, my astonishment on finding that an artist like Claire Dux (Cliffo. 15061A) should have permitted herself the abomination of a vamped-up orchestral accompaniment, as though her own bell-like soprano were not good enough without such supplementary decoration. The excessively slow speed—another mistake—makes a dull song of *Heidenröslein*, and this is the only fault I find with the rendering of Emmy Bettendorf (Parlo. E.10388), for she sings it delightfully to the proper piano accompaniment. (Even more satisfying is the sprightly *Wohin* which completes one side of the disc.) Another by Ernestine Färber-Strasser (Poly. 62372) is also painfully slow and depressing. Is the new German idea about this song going to take permanent root? I hope not.

*Der Hirt auf dem Felsen* is a very long *Lied*, written just before Schubert died to a poem of Schober's, with accompaniment for piano and clarinet. It embodies the reflections of a lonely shepherd (*à la Tannhäuser*, Scene 2) in some melodious themes for voice and clarinet, the former being here interpreted by a clever Viennese singer, Gertrude Foerstel, with truly remarkable breathing capacity. She fills both sides of a 12in. disc—not, of course, all with one breath, but about half as many as most people would take.

*Hark! hark! the lark* (1826) is too familiar to need discussion. The setting of the lines from *Cymbeline* is simply ideal, and of the three records before me Frieda Hempel (H.M.V., D.A.382) provides the perfect one. Alma Gluck spoils hers (H.M.V., D.A.238) by employing an orchestra and a funereal voice; while poor Evan Williams (H.M.V., D.A.383) eliminated all the joy and animation by adopting a dragging tempo and sentimental style. The superb record of *Hark! hark! the lark* made several years ago for the Columbia by David Bispham, has, I fear, been taken out of the catalogue. Could it be re-recorded, I wonder? There are so few *Lieder* sung—and well sung—in English among the collection I am reviewing, and yet the only way to make them appreciated is to make them known. Take, for example, a little gem like *Der Jungling an der Quelle* (1815), which no one but Claire Dux seems to have thought of recording (Poly. 70688). It ought to have been done here

† In 1815 Schubert wrote no fewer than 138 songs, in addition to a vast number of concerted instrumental works, symphonies, Masses, etc.

long ago. I care less, much less, for *\*Der Kreuzzug* (1827), but I allow that Sigrid Onegin (Poly. 72714) makes an even more lachrymose ditty of it than Schubert could have foreseen. On the other hand, nothing could be sweeter or more ingratiating than *Das Lied im Grünen*, as warbled (it is the only word!) by Elena Gerhardt (H.M.V., D.A.706), which was composed in the same year. If this will not inculcate the taste for *Lieder* nothing will.

It is inexplicable to me that so many of Schubert's most beautiful and popular songs should, so far as I am aware, be still unobtainable either in England or the land that gave them birth. Anyhow, only a few have been recorded by more than a single artist. In Austria and Germany everyone knows *\*Der Lindenbaum* and it appears in two or three lists; but the sole example that I have of this jewel of the *Winterreise* cycle (1827) is one by Leo Slezák. He sings it nearly all through in his charming *mezza-voce* and with a rare depth of yearning sentiment—just the right way, in fact. The delicious accompaniment is well played. Slow and solemn is the rendering of the impressive *Litanei* (Litany written in 1816 for All-Souls' Day, Poly. 66143) by a low baritone named Schobl; but the piano here is too heavy. In direct contrast is Elena Gerhardt's *Der Musensohn* (1822, Voc. 3112), which no one sings as she does. I might call it a *cri de joie* in two keys, the happiest thing imaginable, with a dashing accompaniment and ably recorded.

The sublime song, *Nacht und Träume*, is a setting of words by Schiller published in 1825, and worthy of it in every way is the record by Emmy Bettendorf (Parlo. E.10399), who supplies the glorious tone and slow sostenuto that it demands. Less successful is Leo Slezák (Poly. 65773), who takes it slightly faster, yet in a somewhat depressed mood. A much earlier lied called *Seligkeit* (1816) does not strike me as at all noteworthy, though tuneful enough and pleasantly sung by Elisabeth van Endert (\*Poly. 14673).

Then come we to two magnificent specimens of Schubert's genius, viz., the *Ständchen* or *Serenade*,

forming No. 4 of the *Schwanengesang* (inspired by Rellstab's words not long before the master's death) and the no less renowned setting of the *Who is Sylvia?* from Shakespeare's *Two Gentlemen of Verona*. A soprano, three tenors, and a baritone have recorded the *Serenade*, and each is open in some manner to criticism. The English versions are good, but those of John McCormack (H.M.V., D.A.458) and \*Evan Williams (H.M.V., D.A.383) are not enhanced by the use in one case of a violin obbligato by Fritz Kreisler (naughty!) and of a full orchestra in the other. Roy Henderson uses a feeble American translation, but sings well (Voc. K.05167), bar the usual exaggerations; \*Charles Hackett (Col. 7367) employs pure tenor tone and phrases neatly, but introduces an unwarrantable "turn" instead of the *mordent*; while Elisabeth van Endert (Poly. 19110) uses the original German text with her accustomed charm of voice and expression. Beyond this I can offer no decided preference. Again, in the case of *Who is Sylvia?* I fear I must leave the choice to the reader, whilst suggesting the unmistakable merit of Miss Olga Haley's and Mr. John Thorne's efforts. Emmy Bettendorf's is spoilt by an exaggerated slowness that makes only for sickly sentimentality. My complete list of records of this melodic gem is as follows:—

#### WHO IS SYLVIA ?

*Charles Hackett .. ..	Col. 7367.
Dora Labbette .. ..	H.M.V., D.1553.
Arthur Jordan .. ..	Col. 3832.
Herbert Thorpe .. ..	Beltona 6017.
John Thorne .. ..	Aco G.15980.
*Emmy Bettendorf .. ..	Parlo. E.10388.
Hubert Eisdell .. ..	Col. D.1419.
Derek Oldham .. ..	H.M.V., E.395.
Olga Haley .. ..	Voc. X.9561.

The remainder of the Schubert collection I must perforce leave until next month. It is about three-fourths finished in the present article, and at the end of it I shall begin on the Schumann.

HERMAN KLEIN.

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# Analytical Notes and First Reviews



## CHAMBER MUSIC

### POLYDOR.

66425-8 (four 12in. records, 5s. 9d. each).—The Amar String Quartet : **Second String Quartet, Op. 17** (Béla Bartók). A min. score is obtainable from Chester's.

These records, now issued by Polydor in the ordinary way, were originally made for the Japanese Society corresponding to our own N. G. S. I offer fraternal congratulations to our Japanese comrades ; if they can already assimilate such strong meat as this when the Society is still in its infancy, what will they not do later on ?

As for me, I cannot pretend that I have fully digested the work in the short time I have been able to devote to it. It is not the atonal harmony that defeats me, for this, extreme though it is, sounds quite intelligible (except in places) under the sympathetic treatment it receives at the hands of the Amar Quartet. Nor is its form beyond the grasp of the ordinary man, for though it cannot be called orthodox it is far more logical than the work of many less revolutionary composers, and it is quite possible to get the hang of it after one or two hearings, especially if one has the score (which I recommend everybody to get). No, the main difficulty lies with the content ; this quartet is no mere *jeu d'esprit* written *pour épater le bourgeois*, nor has it any of the lightness of the Hindemith Quartet that I reviewed in the Christmas number of *THE GRAMOPHONE* ; it is "sad earnest" throughout, never turning aside from its purpose (though what that purpose is I am not sure), and rising at times to a poignancy of expression which cannot fail to affect even the most unsympathetic hearer.

I shall attempt no analysis ; this would be unnecessary to those in possession of a score and useless to others. I will only say that the work opens with a serious movement (*moderato*, three sides) ; this is succeeded by a kind of *scherzo* (two sides), of which the prevailing mood is a kind of sombre fierceness ; and at the end we have an extremely slow movement (twenty-three lines of score occupy three sides) which for sheer, black misery makes the *Finale* of Tchaikovsky's *Symphonie Pathétique* seem cheerful by comparison. This is not everybody's music, but for those of stout hearts and strong digestions it can be recommended as something which will, I feel sure, repay careful study. Bartók is in the forefront of the advanced group in Central Europe ; the serious and liberal-minded musician cannot ignore him, and he is not likely to hear him more adequately interpreted than here by the Amar Quartet. The fine, clear recording does everything to make the student's task as easy as possible, and it will bear a loud needle.

### MISCELLANEOUS CHAMBER MUSIC RECORDS.

A Columbia disc (9156, 12in., 4s. 6d.) by the *Catterall Quartet* contains one of those queer things of which Russian writers are fond, a *Polka* composed by Sokolow, Glazounov and Liadov in combination. Such a work has interest as a curiosity, but though it is impeccably written it contains little of importance musically. The same may be said of a *Berceuse* (d'Osten-Sacken) on the back. Both pieces are played with the absolute propriety they require, but they do not allow the players a chance to show their mettle. Even more peculiar is Columbia 4155 (10in., 3s.), on which we hear the *Carnival of Venice—Variations* (Briccialdi, arranged Stainer) and *Scotch and Irish Airs* (arranged Stainer) played on four flutes (the *London Flute Quartet*), the lowest instrument being, I think, the rather uncommon bass flute. It is a strange experience to listen to these four flautists twittering away together, though perhaps hardly a satisfying one musically. A curious effect, as if a reed were joining occasionally in the concert, is probably due to the rather clarinet-like quality that the gramophone gives to the lower notes of the flute.

P. L.



## ORCHESTRAL

Instruments used ; H.M.V. new model, large table grand, No. 126, sound-box No. 4, and Columbia large table grand, sound-box No. 7.

### HIS MASTER'S VOICE.

D.1150, 1151, 1152, 1153 (12in., 26s.).—**Royal Albert Hall Orchestra**, conducted by Ronald : **Fifth Symphony** (Beethoven).

C.1304 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**International Concert Orchestra** : **In a Persian Market** and **In a Chinese Temple Garden** (Ketelbey).

In the symphony the first two records each contain one movement, the third containing the *Scherzo* and the beginning of the *Finale*. This re-recording does fitting honour to the centenary year of the master. It conveys, as no previous recording has done, the bigness of the *Fifth*. The old H.M.V. was, I thought, an uncommonly good piece of work for its day, but the power and capacity of the music could not then be shown forth in full beauty. The conception here is solid without being stodgy, and apart from the empty-concert-hall feeling, which is the point I like least in the new recordings, I have scarcely anything but praise for the performance. I recommend everyone to get these fine records. The lower parts in the second movement, that never used to tell very well, now balance excellently, and would be still more clear and lineally valuable if the slight buzz that seems unavoidable at present were not there. I wish it were possible to record in a full concert-hall, but without applause, coughs, sneezes, conversation, programme-rustling, late-coming, shuffling, and the thousand annoyances that one's fellow creatures set up. The music would sound a good deal finer, I believe, than it can at present. The only solution I can think of is to get the audience together and drug it into insensibility. Perhaps the performance of appropriate pieces by certain composers we know might do the trick ?

In the notes given in H.M.V.'s album holding this symphony I fancy a little too much is made of the "Fate knocking at the door" idea. It seems to me that this story is too slick. Beethoven, apparently, simply said, in answer to a rather foolish question : "Thus Fate knocks at the door." So it may, but that does not imply that he had that idea in mind when composing. He did not say so, and I imagine he was merely returning the sort of answer that is fitting when people ask silly questions. In any case, it is well that people who are grown-up musicians, or are growing up, should use such props as little as possible. Drama is ingrained in this great music. If one doesn't feel it in one's bones, labels won't do one much good. Where music is authentically inspired by some poetic or literary impression let us think of it in such terms, by all means. A Strauss symphonic poem without the music may still be dramatic, but it would be foolish not to bear in mind the composer's literary basis, in listening to it. Beethoven very rarely used such a basis, and where there is no real evidence of extra-musical ideas being in his mind during the process of composition we do well to seek the emotional and dramatic values in the texture and life of the music itself—nowhere else. There is plenty to occupy us there, in all conscience.

I expect many music-lovers find, as I do, that magnificent things such as the *Fifth* are not only emotionally moving, but actually stir the moral fibre, in a sense that may be compared (at a distance) to that in which it is stirred and braced by such a book as, for instance, Captain Scott's "Voyage of the *Discovery*"—the sort of book that definitely does good to one's spirit when it is heavy, when the world is too much with us and too heavy upon us.

Therein, to my mind, lies the greatest and grandest justification of music—not its only use, by any means, but its noblest and fullest.

After the *Fifth* it is rather a shame to have to come to earth by way of Chinese temple gardens and other paths of Eastern dalliance. Of course it is not Mr. Ketelbey's fault; but I do wish he and his like would stand up to their art in a bolder fashion, as Beethoven stood up to life. It would be foolish to blame Mr. Ketelbey for not being a Beethoven, or Sullivan for not writing great oratorios. But Sullivan did his job as an artist, and stood up to it, with all its implications, like a man. Our small singers might at least do that. They do their best, we are sure, but they simply haven't the ideas. The giving-out of these trivialities by the International Concert Orchestra is highly adequate.

#### COLUMBIA.

L.1810 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam, conducted by Mengelberg: *The Sylphs* and *Hungarian March* from *The Damnation of Faust* (Berlioz).

L.1813 and 1814 (12in., 13s.).—New Queen's Light Hall Orchestra, conducted by Eric Coates: *Summer Days Suite* (*In a Country Land, On the Edge of the Lake, and At the Dance*). On last side, *Valsette, Wood Nymphs* (Coates).

9160 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—B.B.C. Wireless Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Pitt: *Overture to the Bohemian Girl* (Balfe).

Last month, in reviewing the new *Faust Ballet Music* records, I made a slip, for which I offer the trustworthy Columbia people my apology. In my pleasure at hearing these fine new recordings I brought out all my older discs that have various pieces of the *Ballet Music* upon them, in varying order, and in naming the Columbia items I contrived to get a wrong title before me, and so said that after the Waltz on 1795 there was another movement not mentioned in the title. This, of course, is not so. The title correctly gives the items recorded. It is perhaps the best tribute to new records that one should want to have the additional enjoyment of comparing them with the old, and noting how great is the improvement.

This month's batch gives great pleasure also. Mengelberg's reading of the Berlioz is comfortable. The sylphs are a wee bit solid for my liking, but very neat, and the texture of the music is well reproduced. The March is first rate. Only our Goossens could beat it, I think. The knife-edged keenness of the lash of it is the thing we want, and that is well conveyed here.

The colours in the Coates Suite, already recorded, are the chief thing to enjoy. The ideas follow a little too much the lines of those in the best work of our chief composer of light music, to be quite exciting for their own sake. It is all gracefully done, and that satisfies us, if we are not too exigent about music of this calibre. The orchestra wears its well-known air of Saturday-afternoon gaiety, in which we faintly but clearly perceive the influence of the mind of the audience, dwelling lovingly on the thoughts of tea and crumpets in far Streatham, after the show. "If crumpets be the food of such, play on."

The old favourites in the *Bo' Girl* overture are sweetly sung out. A record of happy memories this, for sophisticated lovers of past days and unsophisticated lovers to-day.

#### BRUNSWICK.

50089 (12in., 8s.).—Cleveland Orchestra, conducted by Sokoloff: *Danse Macabre* (Saint-Saëns) and *Overture to The Merry Wives of Windsor* (Nicolai).

The Cleveland Orchestra made an excellent impression when it came over here a few years ago, and that impression is strengthened by its records. Plenty of rehearsal gives a finish to its performances, the effect of which is enhanced by its brilliance. These two items are splendidly thrown off. This recording seems even better than the excellent recent British one. The low strings in the Nicolai are splendidly sonorous. I believe that Mr. P. Wilson will have something interesting to tell us soon about Brunswick's new plan of getting more music on to an ordinary twelve-inch disc. The new methods of reproducing will bring the necessarily smaller volume up to normal, and thus a very helpful step will have been taken.

#### PARLOPHONE.

E.10516, 10517, 10518, 10519 (12in., 18s.).—Orchestra of the State Opera House, Berlin, conducted by E. Moerike: *Casse Noisette Suite* (Tchaikovsky).

E.10520 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Orchestra of the State Opera House, Berlin, conducted by E. Moerike: *Overture to The Bartered Bride* (Smetana).

E. 10521 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Dajos Bela's Orchestra: Selection from *Andrea Chénier* (Giordano).

E.10522 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Edith Lorand Orchestra: *La Serenade (Spanish Valse)* (Metra), and *Venetian Barcarolle* (Leoncavallo).

Of the *Nutcracker* set, the first record contains the *Miniature Overture* and the *March*; the second, the *Sugar-Plum Fairy* and the Russian *Trepak*; the third, the *Arab Dance* and the *Chinese Dance*; and the last, the *Reed-Pipe Dance* and the *Flower Valse*.

As I write I lack two of the dances. The others are mostly well recorded, one or two very well. The *March* is happy, but the *Overture* is a little thin-toned, and there is a hint of a fiddle scramble near the end. Detail is good in most of the pieces; there is a precision and neatness about this that Tchaikovsky's pell-mell orchestration ought to receive if it is to tell as he meant it to. There is an enjoyable air of fantasy about the playing; it is of the right calibre for a fairy play. The *Trepak* has not before been recorded in better style. Even here I feel that the tone is not quite as rich and absolutely dead in tune as it might be. The latter point may, of course, be referable to the recording method or to the placing of the orchestra. The *Reed-Pipe Dance* is played with plenty of attention to its points—perhaps slightly too much, but it is of the rather mannered type and can stand such treatment pretty well. Altogether, the items to hand of this set are well set off and will give a great deal of pleasure. Since writing this I have received the remaining Dances, and like them very much. In sonority and serenity they come out most effectively.

*The Bartered Bride* has not, apparently, been heard in this country—at any rate, for many years—though it is still popular over the water and has held the boards very well in the country of its birth. Smetana was a little piqued after his first opera, imagining that some people would think him a mere imitator of Wagner, and so he wrote the *Bride*, to show that he could do a light thing in good native style. As far as one can judge without hearing it, the body of the opera is not so good as the overture leads one to expect it will be. But the overture is certainly good fun—one of the best pieces on a fugal basis. It ranks, indeed, with the *Magic Flute* overture as a capital example of fugal treatment. Here it is thrown off with admirable spirit. The speed of the upper strings gives one a momentary anxiety as to whether the lower will keep up. This they do very well, though one cannot expect to hear their part perfectly distinctly; at the pace this is next to impossible. The fiddles are, as in the Tchaikovsky overture, the least bit thin near the end, and the last few chords have a touch of shrillness which would possibly not be noticed on a machine such as (it is hoped) will shortly do still fuller justice to the interesting new products now coming our way.

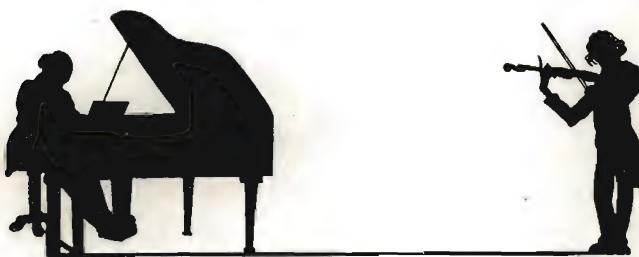
The Selection from *Andrea Chénier* by Dajos Bela's Orchestra is a quite captivating bit of work, with some tasty orchestral trimmings. The slight thinness now and again in the strings is similar to that which I noticed in other Parlophones this month, so it seems likely that either the recording or the instrument will account for it. It is not sufficient to annoy. Those who like a little sentiment, laid on with discretion, will enjoy this music.

The two Lorand pieces are both graceful café items, played in irreproachable style and recorded as large as life.

K. K.

#### Blurb

How inadequate our bulletins seem when we glance through those of American companies! Listen to this, which is headed "Aileen's New Crush":—Aileen Stanley, at least in the world of song, is seeing things just now in a sweet pink light. You have heard her, on past records, yearn for a mate, Sass the iceman, or make a date for a chowder-club dance with some young citizen of the toughest make nature produces. But this time she is in special luck, for she has fallen in love with a new papa, who is six feet tall and likely to be a rough kisser. Victor 10-in. record, No. 20198.



## INSTRUMENTAL

### HARPSICHORD.

*Lewis Richards* in **Rondeau** (Rameau) and **The Brook** (Ayrton), both recorded on Brunswick 3205 (10in., 3s.), shows himself an excellent harpsichordist. He has, I suspect, an unusually powerful instrument, or else the recording is unexpectedly full for this instrument. In any case the effect is delightful, though the music is not quite so interesting as the titles had led me to hope. From the musical standpoint, indeed, I prefer the well-known **Pastorale** of Scarlatti (*Anna Linde*, Parlophone E.10524, 12in., 4s. 6d.), though I should have liked it played a little faster. Unfortunately, my advance pressing of this was somewhat defective but the **Gigge** (Bull) and **Hornpipe** (Purcell) which go on the back of it are quite satisfactorily recorded, though rather less striking musically. The defect in the **Pastorale** will probably be remedied before the disc is issued.

### PIANO.

I prefer *Murdoch's* Rachmaninoff **Prelude in C sharp minor** (Columbia L.1815, 12in., 6s. 6d.) to Hambourg's recent version, and his interpretation of **Sleepers, awake** (Bach-Busoni) is dignified, though I was not entirely satisfied with some of the difficult turns in the melody. This piece was originally part of a *cantata*; Bach himself transcribed it for organ and Busoni has re-edited it for the piano; the arrangement is fairly faithful to the original, but I do not find it makes an effective piano solo. There is yet another **Moonlight Sonata** (Beethoven), this time by *Ignaz Friedman* on Columbia L.1818-9 (two 12in. records, 13s.). Is there some dark conspiracy among the companies to convert us gramophiles into gramo-maniacs (or rather gramo-lunatics)? One moon-struck reviewer at any rate finds it hard to look steadily at this cluster of satellites and keep a level head. But Friedman gives us some beautifully mellow *pianissimo* playing and the company some fine *sostenuto* melody effects in the first movement. I have no quarrel with the slow *tempo* here (it is justified by success), but there is a questionable use of *rubato* in one or two places. The *allegretto* is also taken very deliberately, and here I find it harder to sympathise (it means cutting out two of the three repeats). But Friedman's treatment of the *Finale* is worth attention, even if the passage work is not always quite clear. On another record (Columbia D.1558, 10in., 4s. 6d.) he plays Mendelssohn's **Scherzo in E minor** crisply and well; Mendelssohn's *Scherzos* are usually light and fairy-like, and this is a good example of its excellent type. **Elle danse** (Friedman), on the other side, has less musical value but is quite pleasant to hear. *Leslie England's* renderings of Chopin **Etudes in F minor** and **C sharp minor** and Paderewski's **Caprice in G** (Columbia 4156, 10in., 3s.) are characterised by a clear and fluent technique. He rightly takes all three pieces at a great pace, but I felt no discomfort except, perhaps, for a slight *malaise* during the *F minor Etude*, where the rhythm might have been more strongly marked. All these Columbia recordings sound best on my new H.M.V. machine when played with a medium steel needle.

Rachmaninoff's performance of Liszt's **Dance of the Gnomes** (H.M.V., DA.827, 10in., 6s.) is singularly effective, and I think the recorders have done well to sacrifice something of sweetness for the sake of a brilliant tone. He plays his own **Etude Tableau in A minor, Op. 39**, equally well, but somehow the Rachmaninoff fireworks lack the "fizz" of Liszt's, though the music may have more depth. The most notable thing about Hambourg's record (H.M.V., C.1303, 12in., 4s. 6d.) is the first-rate reproduction; I have never heard the formidable problems set by **La Cathédrale Engloutie** (Debussy) so admirably solved. But the playing is very disappointing; **The Harmonious Blacksmith** (Handel) is blurred and shapeless, and the Debussy, though rather better, has lost most of its subtlety and dignity. There is a great deal of

music that Hambourg can perform splendidly, but these pieces are definitely not for him. *George Bertram's* playing of **La Campanella** (Liszt) on Polydor 66437 (12in., 5s. 9d.) is one of the most astonishing pieces of sheer virtuosity that I have ever heard; the speed and evenness of his runs make one gasp. He is also very successful with the Chopin **A flat Etude** on the other side, though rather free with his *rubato*; but in the **G flat Etude** that he links with this I had an uneasy suspicion that the music was trying to run away with him. The recording is splendidly clear but a little "tubby" in the upper registers, a defect which is naturally most apparent in the Liszt. On the whole this is distinctly a record for gramophiles to hear. Another such is Vocalion K.05281 (12in., 4s. 6d.) on which *York Bowen* manages to get the whole of Beethoven's brief **Sonata in F sharp, Op. 78**, though he has to give up the repeats in the first movement. This seldom-played work is the one which the composer once said he preferred to the *Moonlight*, and even if readers are unwilling to go as far as this they will agree that it was well worth recording. The unconscious allusion to "Britannia rules the waves" at the beginning of the second movement is nothing but a coincidence. The pianist's technique is excellent and his interpretation well considered; there is a certain rigidity about the rhythm, but this I attribute in part to the occasional failure of the otherwise blameless recording to sustain a chord or a *cantabile* melody,

### ORGAN.

An Aco record, G.16129 (10in., 2s. 6d.), contains **The Lost Chord** (Sullivan) and **Pomp and Circumstance, No. 1** (Elgar), this last being in effect *Land of Hope and Glory* with a short prelude. The player is *Bernard Russell*, and I found his style muddy and unsatisfactory. This being so it would hardly be fair to criticise his instrument, but I got the impression that the recording was quite worthy of better material. My congratulations to H.M.V. on the production of another organ record that is attractive without being very loud. *Dupré's* very individual registration of Franck's **Pastorale** (D.1145, 12in., 6s. 6d.) has been most faithfully reproduced, and if only the deep pedal part at the end had come off as well as it does at its previous appearance near the beginning I should have no criticism to offer; as it is, this minor blemish only shows that experts are human. The construction of the **Pastorale** is interesting; readers will not fail to note that the opening theme is later modified so as to form the principal subject of the *scherzo*-like middle section, but they may miss the point at which this same opening theme is used near the end as an accompaniment to the *sostenuto* melody which appears at the beginning of the work (and again here) as an antiphonal answer to it. *Dupré* takes the middle section a little too fast for my liking, and though his use of the reeds is in accordance with Franck's directions I am not convinced that the composer intended quite such a pungent flavour as this.

I observe, by the way, that in the January GRAMOPHONE ("Notes and Queries") G. L. J. takes me to task for referring to Franck in an October review as a "French organist." His contention that Franck's compositions are more German than French is one that has often been put forward and as often disputed. A glance at my review will show, I think, that I evaded the problem (which cannot be dealt with in a review) by describing Franck not as a French composer but as a French organist. This he surely was; he spent all the later part of his life as an organist in Paris, and his often-expressed delight in the organ at St. Clothilde, taken in combination with his directions for registration, should be sufficient to establish my point that he accepted the French organ traditions as exemplified in the work of organ-builders like Cavaille, Coll and players such as Widor, Guilmant and Dupré.

Polydor 95006-7 (two 12in. records, 5s. 9d. each), containing Handel's **Organ Concerto No. 4** played by *Walter Fischer*, are full of interest. The recording lacks the volume and depth of the best English reproduction, but on the other hand the details come out with astonishing clearness, and I have heard no English organ record that can surpass them in this respect. Part of the credit must certainly go to the organist (who is described as "of the Berlin Cathedral" and may, perhaps, be playing on the Cathedral organ), and I congratulate him on having produced the first good organ record of real importance that I can listen to without discomfort, using a loud steel needle. I thank him also for being more chary with the reeds than most of his brethren (my tastes are not French). From this implied criticism I must, however, except *William Wolstenholme*, who also exercises a wise discretion as to both reeds and volume. His **Rondino in D flat** is sentimental stuff, but his **Sketch No. 3** has real merit; both are recorded on Vocalion

K.05282 (12in., 4s. 6d.) with a round, solid quality that is most pleasing, and plenty of bass. If the virtues of this disc and the Polydors mentioned above could be combined what a super-record we should have! Lastly, there is *Aubade* (Grieg), played by Arnold Greir on Zonophons 2851 (10in., 2s. 6d.); this is tastefully done and very well recorded; but when in *Drink to me only* on the back he is joined by a cornet I feel sad. What has this simple, fresh little love-song done to deserve this?

#### VIOLIN.

*Peggy Cochrane* in Simigaglia's *Capricco* (Capriccio ?) all' *Antica* (Aco G.16128, 10in., 2s. 6d.) and *Albert Sandler* in Kreisler's *Schön Rosmarin* (Vocalion X.9934, 10in., 3s.) give us some good tone and agreeable small talk on their violins. But each has lapsed sadly on the back of the disc. *Peggy Cochrane* sinks to *Valse Caressante* (Respighi), a lamentably banal production, and *Sandler* descends even lower to *Love's Old Sweet Song* (Molloy). Why waste good playing and good reproduction on this kind of stuff? Bloch's music has been called "revolutionary" but I find nothing in *Nigun* (Improvisation), played by *Joseph Szigeti* on the two sides of Columbia D.1557 (10in., 4s. 6d.), to justify the epithet; it is all perfectly clear, a little sombre, but quite strong. It cannot be easy to play, but *Szigeti* does it admirably and is well recorded; a certain harshness in some double-stopping near the end of the first side is not sufficient to detract appreciably from the merits of an undeniably good record. After this *Letter of Love* (Cui, edited by Elman) and *At Evening* (Frimal, transcribed by Kramer), recorded for H.M.V. by *Mischa Elman* (DA.802, 10in., 6s.), are rather invertebrate, but the violinist and recorders have given us some of the best violin tone I have ever heard, and this is a compensation. The same virtues are displayed on D.B.985 (12in., 8s. 6d.), wherein *Kreisler* charms us with two of his most popular snippets, *Liebesfreud* and *Liebeslied* (both composed by himself). *Vitali's Chaconne* (played by *Edith Lorand*, with string orchestra, on the two sides of Parlophone E.10523, 12in., 4s. 6d.) warms up at the end, but is elsewhere rather lacking in life, partly, perhaps, on account of the dullness of the orchestral part. The recording is some of the best that Parlophone have given us in this genre for some time. *Schubert's Andantino No. 1* (from *Rosamunde*), played by *Manuello* for Regal (G.8729, 10in., 2s. 6d.), has the same melody as the slow movement of the A minor *Quartet* recently recorded for the N.G.S. I am under the impression that it is an *Entr'acte* (not *Ballet Music*, as stated on the label), though the *Andantino No. 2* on the other side is correctly described as *Ballet Music* from the same work. The playing is accurate enough, but dull; the violin tone is good but the piano is ineffective, especially in the first piece.

#### CELLO.

*Antoni Sala's* Chopin *Nocturne* in E flat (Columbia 9185, 12in., 4s. 6d.) is rather a gloomy business; the *Mazurka* (Popper) is more sprightly, but I cannot honestly call it interesting, though the recording gives us some admirably sonorous low notes on the 'cello. *Cedric Sharpe's* playing of Pierné's *Serenade* and Beethoven's *Minuet* in G (H.M.V., B.2390, 10in., 3s.) is better value; the 'cellist manages to put some freshness into these well-worn numbers (no mean achievement) and his record may be recommended. Pierné's *Serenade* has also been selected with Thomé's *Simple Aveu* by *Alfred Wallenstein* (Zonophone 2847, 10in., 2s. 6d.). Musically this record is insignificant, but the playing is very good and it is exceedingly well recorded.

#### FLUTE.

Neither Chaminade's *Concertino* nor Heinrich Hofmann's *Konzertstück* (*Finale*), played by *John Amadio* on H.M.V., C.1302 (12in., 4s. 6d.), is profoundly beautiful, but somehow one doesn't express one's deepest feelings in terms of the flute (Frederick the Great being the exception that proves the rule). What we look for in a flute solo is lively chatter and brilliant sallies, and these we get in abundance. *John Amadio* is superb and the recording first-rate; the orchestra is an "also ran," but it is justly dealt with by the experts.

NOTE.—May I offer my thanks to J. C. W. C. for his note on "Minuit" in the January GRAMOPHONE ("Notes and Queries"). Of course he is right, and I owe readers an apology for a mistake I should never have made (I don't know why my mind was running so insistently on "Minuets"). The review referred to appeared in the November number (p. 242), so I fear it may be too late to advise gramophiles to accept what I then said with caution—or, better still, not to accept it at all.

P. L.



## OPERATIC

**EMMY BETTENDORF** (soprano): *Ocean, thou mighty Monster* from *Oberon* (Weber). Two parts, in German. Parlophone E.10525 (12in., 4s. 6d.).

**ANNE ROSELLE** (soprano): *Ma dall' arido stelo divulsa* and *Morrò, ma prima in grazia* from *Un Ballo in Maschera* (Verdi). In German. Polydor 73025 (12in., 6s. 9d.).

**ELISABETH RETHBERG** (soprano): *O Patria mia* and *Ritorna vincitor* from *Aida* (Verdi). In Italian. Brunswick 50084 (12in., 8s.).

**MARGARET SHERIDAN** (soprano): *Ave Maria* from *Otello* (Verdi) and *Un bel di vedremo* from *Madame Butterfly* (Puccini). In Italian. H.M.V., D.B.881, 12in., 8s. 6d.

**SIGRID ONEGIN** (contralto): *Brindisi* from *Lucrezia Borgia* (Donizetti) and *Stride la vampa*, Act II, Scene 2, from *Il Trovatore* (Verdi). In Italian. Brunswick 15110 (10in., 5s. 6d.).

**TINO PATTIERA** (tenor): *Che gelida manina* from *La Bohème* (Puccini) and *Flower Song* from *Carmen* (Bizet). In Italian. Parlophone E.10526 (12in., 4s. 6d.).

**AROLDO LINDI** (tenor): *Ah si, ben mio* from *Il Trovatore* (Verdi) and *Flower Song* from *Carmen* (Bizet). In Italian. Col. L.1816 (12in., 6s. 6d.).

**ERIC MARSHALL** (baritone): *Nemico della patria* from *Andrea Chénier* (Giordano) in Italian, and *O Star of Eve* from *Tannhäuser* (Wagner) in English. H.M.V., D.1146 (12in., 6s. 6d.).

**HEINRICH SCHLUSNUS** (baritone): *Death of Valentine* from *Faust* (Gounod) and *Lullaby* from *Mignon* (Thomas). In German. Polydor 66435 (12in., 5s. 9d.).

**LAURIZ MELCHIOR** (tenor) and **EMMY BETTENDORF** (soprano): *Love Duet* from *Lohengrin*, Act 3 (Wagner), *Ametst du nicht* and *Höchstes Vertrauen*. In German. Parlophone E.10527 (12in., 4s. 6d.).

**GRAND OPERA CHORUS**: *Miserere* from *Il Trovatore* (Verdi) and *The Angelus* from *Maritana* (Wallace). In English. Regal G.8728 (2s. 6d.).

**EVA TURNER, E. RUBADI, F. CINISELLI, L. PACI, B. CARMASSI** and **LA SCALA CHORUS**: *Finale*, Act III, from *La Gioconda* (Ponchielli) and (La Scala Chorus of Milan only) *Prologue* (Chorus of Angels) from *Mefistofele* (Boito). In Italian. Col. L.1817 (12in., 6s. 6d.).

*Emmy Bettendorf*.—Thanks to the improvements wrought by electrical recording, this is by a long way the best realisation of Frau Bettendorf's talent that the gramophone has yet yielded. Perhaps also the finest rendering of *Ocean, thou mighty Monster* heard through the same medium from the lips of a modern soprano. It is, indeed, a welcome example of the "grand style," with the voice of broad, noble proportions, the exceptional declamatory power, and the dignity of phrasing essential for the piece. The "nearness" of the voice is not its least surprising feature, while every word comes out with irreproachable clearness. The exciting *coda*, made so familiar by the *Oberon* overture, is the better for not being hurried, and the orchestra is excellent throughout.

*Anne Roselle*.—Apparently this is not a new piece of recording. Anyhow the "scratching" sounds like a reminder of old days; nor does the tone represent the singer on the same level, or anything like it, that one perceives in her new *Turandot* records (noticed elsewhere). She may be an artist of "moods," yet that would not account for a marked tremolo, lack of breadth in the style, or a weak medium register contrasted with those bell-like headnotes of hers that never fail. In spite of which, one feels that she is the right singer for the unhappy heroine of *Un Ballo in Maschera*—emotional, dramatic, tense, and impassioned.

*Elisabeth Rethberg*.—Again I turn to my stock of superlatives, for these up-to-date recordings of the two great *Aida* solos far surpass any yet attempted. Concerning the singer there is little

that is fresh to be said. She is a "star" of the first magnitude, with an orbit that includes, I believe, the U.S.A., and ought to include this country ere many moons have passed. Her voice is a pure dramatic soprano, her breathing impeccable, her smooth *cantilena* an object-lesson, her high C in *O Patria Mia* a really beautiful note. Add to these things intense expression, a wonderful *diminuendo*, unlimited power, dramatic colour, true artistic perception, and, thanks to realistic recording, you have a fair idea of how Elisabeth Rethberg sings *Aida*. The *Riorna vincitor* is equally glorious, and I am thankful to say she does not drag the "Numi pietà" at the end.

*Margaret Sheridan*.—The *Ave Maria* from the last act of Verdi's *Otello* requires on the whole more repose, more complete steadiness of tone than Miss Sheridan brings to bear upon it. The tone itself is beautiful and charged with deep feeling; the words are very distinct. However, the drawbacks that one perceives all too plainly in this exquisite piece are scarcely faults calling for criticism in *Un bel di*; indeed, oddly enough, they hardly seem out of place. Here the Irish soprano is heard to much greater advantage, and her Italian diction, particularly as regards purity of vowel tone, is far more satisfactory. Both excerpts are recorded and accompanied faultlessly.

*Sigrid Onegin*.—This fine contralto would do well to study her effects a little less. She makes them too obvious and often sacrifices artistic discretion to a longing for sensation. Knowing that she has a grand organ and unlimited sustaining power, she overdoes her pauses and, as for instance in her cadenza to the *Brindisi* from *Lucrezia Borgia*, salutes your ear with a prolonged note that (honestly!) resembles the warning of an L.M.S. engine approaching Euston. The "new process" does not permit this sort of thing, even with the softest of needles. The best German contralto that ever sang the *Brindisi* to her countrymen (who are very fond of it) was Schumann-Heink, and *Sigrid Onegin* is just as sprightly and staccato in it as she was, that is, when she once gets off her long notes. In her splendid *Stride la vampa* she is more restrained, yet with a positive torrent of gorgeous tone.

*Tino Pattiera*.—Although one cannot help admiring this tenor's luscious quality and engaging style, it seems wrong somehow to sing *Che gelida manina* with the same dark, passionate tone that he puts into the *Carmen* song. Surely they call for utterly different modes of colouring and expression—the one ingenuous, ingratiating, the other half appeal, half pent-up ecstasy. But *Tino Pattiera* never varies his vocal complexion, which is essentially Southern. He has a good voice, though, and is very clearly recorded.

*Aroldo Lindi*.—A tenor of quite another colour, this; extremely bright, telling, and powerful. In some respects I prefer his *Flower Song* to that just noticed, while his *Ah sì, ben mio* quite smacks of the old Tamagno school. Altogether a very satisfying disc.

*Eric Marshall*.—I am convinced that if this excellent baritone would cultivate deeper breathing he could wholly overcome the annoying tremolo that afflicts him at odd moments. His natural tone is frank and unspoilt, his timbre extremely sympathetic; but both would gain from darker "covering" and thus facilitate stronger contrasts. In effect his rendering of *Nemico della patria* (*Andrea Chénier*) is too indulgent and sentimental for a monologue of that sort; but on the other hand his *O Star of Eve* is quite appropriately poetic and refined. The H.M.V. accompaniments and recording are beyond praise.

*Heinrich Schlusnus*.—This time the popular Polydor baritone gives a couple of old favourites that will be highly appreciated in their improved (i.e., increased) degree of dynamic energy. Valentine's act of shuffling off this mortal coil seems a rather lonely business without the aid of either his sister or a chorus. Still, he does very well for a dying man, and fills the stage-gramophone with huge volumes of sound. A nice contrast to this is the smooth, tender performance of the old man's *Lullaby* from *Mignon*.

*Lauritz Melchior and Emmy Bettendorf*.—A continuation of the love-duet from the bridal chamber scene in *Lohengrin*, a portion of which was noticed in this column last month. The whole makes a singularly fine performance of the scene, sung with admirable art by two accomplished interpreters and ably supported by the orchestra.

*Grand Opera Chorus*.—Here is more for the money. A good well-filled disc for half a crown containing the *Miserere* from the *Trovatore* capably sung in English by a strong, well-drilled chorus with competent soloists—anonymous, it is true, but undeniably there—bells, orchestra, and everything complete. In *The Angelus* from *Maritana* the tone and the equipment are no less adequate.

*La Scala Chorus*.—Although the Finale to the third act of *La Gioconda* is not what I consider an ideal choice for gramophonic purposes, yet it gives good opportunity for showing how the new process brings the separate solo voices into clear relief, and as such this fine Columbia record is quite a success. If I prefer the *Prologue* to *Mefistofele* it is first of all because I think it a finer piece of music, and secondly, because the deep, rich volume of the Italian voices in the Scala Chorus produce an impression, aided by the brass of the orchestra, of something grand and noble, which is what Boito's stupendous opening really is. Altogether there is material here both for enjoyment and admiration.

HERMAN KLEIN.



## CHORAL

### COLUMBIA.

*The Don Cossacks Choir* conducted by Serge Jaroff: *Signal March of the Cavalry* (Kolotilin) and *The Imprisoned Cossacks* (Nistschensky). *The Twelve Robbers* (Serge Jaroff) and *On the Road to St. Petersburg* (Folk-song). 9154-5 (two 12in., 4s. 6d. each).

*Kedroff Male Quartet* (unaccompanied): *Two Russian Folk-dance Songs*: (a) *Allegretto* (N Kedroff), (b) *Allegro, Allegro, Molto* (Gretchaninoff); and *Valse* (Vogel). D.1552 (10in., 4s. 6d.).

*The Sheffield Choir* conducted by Sir Henry Coward: *Strike the Lyre* (T. Cooke), *The Sea hath its Pearls* (Longfellow and Pinsky) and *A Secret* (humorous, Coward). 9159 (12in., 4s. 6d.).

### REGAL.

*The Cloister Choir* with organ: *Praise, my soul, the King of Heaven* (Smart) and *Great God, what do I see and hear?* (traditional). G.8734 (10in., 2s. 6d.).

### HIS MASTER'S VOICE.

*Choir of H.M. Chapels Royal* conducted by Stanley Roper, recorded at the Chapel Royal, St. James's Palace, London: *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring* (J. S. Bach) and *Christmas Carols*: (a) *Gabriel's Message*, (b) *Born this Day* (arr. Pittman). E.445 (10in., 4s. 6d.).

*The English Singers* (unaccompanied sextet): *To shorten winter's sadness* (a Ballett by Weelkes, ed. Fellowes) and *The Turtle Dove* (Folk Song, arr. Vaughan Williams). E.446 (10in., 4s. 6d.).

*The Philharmonic Choir* with orchestra, conducted by Kennedy Scott, in the Queen's Hall, London: *Mozart's Requiem Mass, Domine, Jesu Christe and Hostias*. D.1148 (12in., 6s. 6d.).

### ZONOPHONE.

*The Victor Male Chorus* with orchestra: *Land of Hope and Glory* (Elgar). *The Associated Glee Clubs of America* (1,000 male voices) recorded at their performance in New York City: *The Clock* (Mark Andrews). G.O.73 (10in., 3s. 6d.).

*Church Choir* with grand organ: *O God our Help in ages past* (Croft) and *Jesus shall reign* (Rimington, Duckworth). 2846 (10in., 2s. 6d.).

One choral sensation of last month was the three Russian records. On the *Cossacks'* records all their extraordinary vivid effects are there. Choice between their two records is practically a matter of taste. Perhaps the folk-song is, as one might expect, the best. There seems to me still some of that curious vagueness of tonality in their singing, perhaps due to shouting, perhaps to tremolo in individual singers—as in the otherwise extremely good soloist.

The *Kedroff Quartet*, however, rouses my enthusiasm still more than the choir. There are no particular remarks to be made about their record.

Those who like nineteenth-century part-songs will be delighted with the *Sheffield Choir*—if they are not too particular about

pleasant tonal reproduction. *A Secret* is a leg-pull whose humour is none too subtle or deep, but may pass in the excellence of its setting.

Here is another *Regal* hymn record, almost as good as that which I included in last month's list, and very similar.

A correspondent (W. Probst) has noticed "with deep regret" that the *Chapels Royal* record which I now mention has not been previously picked out for special notice. I plead guilty. The fact is that last month I could only pick out (of the December records) those which seemed to me really commendable, and that as, on this record, hardly one word is distinguishable, the otherwise perfectly finished performance of the carols merely exasperated me. Perhaps in the Bach I attached too much importance to the fact that the delightful instrumental accompaniment could be but poorly imitated, as it is here, on the organ. Anyhow, I gladly admit that the Bach is glorious music perfectly rendered excepting in diction.

At last we have another record of *The English Singers*. To those who know these singers' work, I need only say that, of their records it is one of the best, perhaps the very best, they have ever done. To others, it is one of the finest, and withal, most attractive, works of art the gramophone has ever given us. I recommend buying copies of the two pieces, at a few pence a time.

Another record of *The Philharmonic Choir* in Mozart's *Requiem*, and, like the first two, superb. This one is not quite perfect (upper strings, for instance, are apt to be too strong occasionally) but if we are to have the whole *Requiem*, and none is worse than this, we shall be deeply grateful. Surely the soloist's names are nothing to be ashamed of?

*The Victor Male Chorus* gives a purely choral version of the Elgar, very well indeed. The *Glee Clubs* give a record full of intriguing bell effects.

The *Church Choir* record is almost perfect, except that the tune *Rimington* is beneath contempt, and that the organist should be severely censured for the last verse of *O God our Help*. C. M. C.



## SONGS

### COLUMBIA.

J. Dale Smith (baritone) : *Fourteen Songs from "When we were very young"* and *The King's Breakfast* (A. A. Milne and H. Fraser-Simson). 4104-7 (four 10in. records, 3s. each).

W. F. Watt (tenor) with orchestra : *The Foggy Dew* (Milligan arr. C. Milligan Fox) and *The Bard of Armagh* (arr. J. F. Larchet). 4157 (10in., 3s.).

Hubert Eisdell (tenor) : *Bird's Song at Eventide* (R. Barrie and Eric Coates) and *Dusk in the Valley* (Meredith and Liza Lehmann). D.1556 (10in., 4s. 6d.).

Harold Williams (baritone) with orchestra : *When the Sergeant-Major's on Parade* (Longstaffe) and *The Company Sergeant-Major* (P. H. B. Lyon and W. Sanderson). 4159 (10in., 3s.).

Francis Russell (tenor) : *I heard you Singing* (R. Barrie and Eric Coates) and *The Blind Ploughman* (Radcliffe-Hall and Coningsby Clarke). 4158 (10in., 3s.).

I can't let go this (the first) opportunity of drawing attention to four records which appeared in Columbia's Christmas list, four of the most delightful discs ever issued. For these family favourites *Dale Smith* is not merely childish, but really lives his part. He is simple and tender, almost frail, and he gives to things the child's wide-eyed interest and blissful ignorance of true (?) values. He adds to the original fourteen songs, *The King's Breakfast*, which to me is worth the whole of the other bunch all together. Of the four discs, No. 4104 contains *Happiness, Missing, In the Fashion, Half-way Down, Hoppity and Growing up*; 4105 has *Buckingham Palace, Politeness, The Three Foxes*, and *Brownie*; on 4106 are *Market Square, The Christening, and Lines and Squares*; and on 4107 are *Vespers* and *The King's Breakfast*.

Another of *Watt's* seductive Irish records is to be noted—not, perhaps, quite equal to the best of last month's three but having some attractive orchestration thrown in.

*Eisdell* seems greatly moved by the touching sentiments of his songs, and will doubtless move many hearers.

*Williams* has excellent vocal qualification for the offices of the sergeant-major, but I doubt if he has quite the temperament, and I think he makes one false step himself.

*Russell* uses two songs on which I decline comment as vehicles for a voice with power and some good tone.

All the three last-mentioned records are sore trials to needles, and to the tone of the machine, less so in *Russell's* than in the other two.

### VOCALION.

Olga Haley (mezzo-soprano), accompanied by Ivor Newton : *Nuit d'Etoiles* (Night of Stars, Debussy) and *Soft-footed Snow* (Sigurd Lie). X.9932 (10in., 3s.).

Watcyn Watcyns (bass-baritone), with choir and orchestra : *Land of Hope and Glory* (Elgar) and *Yeomen of England* (E. German). K.05285 (12in., 4s. 6d.).

Ernest Butcher (baritone) : *Nothin' at all* (Dick Henty) and *Leeds Old Church*. K.05280 (12in., 4s. 6d.).

Malcolm McEachern (bass) with orchestra : *The Roman Road* (Dick Henty) and *A King's Man* (B. C. Hilliam). K.05279 (12in., 4s. 6d.).

### ACO.

John Thorne (baritone) : *In Corbar Woods* and *Across the Valley* (M. S. Baxter) and *To the Night* (Carl Bohm). G.16127 (10in., 2s. 6d.).

*Olga Haley*, whom our Editor calls "The best English singer for the gramophone," and whom I should class with the best of all countries, is now better than ever. By this Marconi process (by which Vocalion are giving us some wonderful vocal records), her voice now has all its native beauty. Altogether she brings one near to ecstasy, especially in Debussy's lovely *Nuit d'Etoiles*. On *Soft-footed Snow* I commented at length about twelve months ago. It is a more or less "modern" song, not great, perhaps, but it has a peculiar fascination. *Olga Haley's* French diction seems to me better than her English.

I suppose we must now have *Land of Hope and Glory* newly recorded by every company that ever was. I can't think of its being much better done than here (unless in the other form in which I review it among choral records), except by the orchestra, where, among other untrue tone, there is something like an organ's Vox Humana. Much the same remarks may be made of German's song.

*Butcher*, the village simpleton, is almost as good as usual. But he doesn't amuse me quite so much in the more sophisticated Henty song. *McEachern's* record will doubtless be very popular.

The name *M. S. Baxter* is new to me. He (or she) has, possibly, some poetic feeling, and, certainly, a melodic gift, which at present, however, bears no individual stamp and is tricked out with harmonies which are by now the merest conventionalities and whose applications here are quite far-fetched. Note, for instance, the first phrase of *Across the Valley*, where the melody simply steps down the common chord, yet has erotic harmonies tacked on for no apparent good reason. For those who do not know the Bohm song one may say that it has a measure of quiet beauty of thought which raises it well above most late nineteenth-century songs. But the real marvel about this record is the new-process recording of John Thorne's voice—the English baritone at his best. For vocal tone I know no better record than this, not many as good. But it is clearly not Aco's fault that Thorne's diction is still imperfect.

### BELTONA.

Frank Twigg (bass-baritone) : *The Mill Wheel* (old German melody) and (in Italian) *Santa Lucia* (Neapolitan Barcarolle, Marzials); *Drinking Song* (from Flotow's *Martha*) and *Until* (Sanderson). 1121-2 (two 10in., 2s. 6d. each).

Molly O'Callaghan (contralto) : *Open the Door Softly* (arr. Herbert Hughes) with violin obbligato, and *Has Sorrow thy young days shaded?* (Thomas Moore). 1124 (10in., 2s. 6d.).

Howard Fry (baritone) : *Come to the Cook-house Door* (Wolsey Charles) and *One of the Guards* (Howard Fisher). 6069 (10in., 3s.).

**Jack Wright** (tenor) : *The garden of your heart* (Dorel) and *I hear you calling me* (Marshall). 6070 (10in., 3s.).

Beltona may boast of yet another fine singer in *Frank Twigg*, though, on these records, he has a tremolo and applies cheap effect to sound music, as in *The Mill Wheel*. He is soundly effective in the *Drinking Song* and almost brilliant in the Neapolitan *Barcarolle*.

Last October I drew attention to *Molly O'Callaghan* as a new half-crown bargain. The faults in her first record are still present, but in far less degree, and not enough to spoil what is a good record, especially for her rich deep tones in *Has sorrow*. Her *Open the door* is not equal to Watt's of last month, which costs sixpence more.

It is enough to make one cry to find what fatuity *Howard Fry* and *Jack Wright* have quickly come to. One can only say that they make the songs as thrilling as could be, especially *One of the Guards*, which is almost exciting.

#### POLYDOR.

**Fritz Soot** (tenor), accompanied by Waldemar Liachowsky : *Wander-song* (*Wanderlied*) and *Spring Wandering* (*Frühlingsfahrt*) (Schumann); *The Double* (*Der Doppelgänger*, Schubert), and *The Nut Tree* (*Der Nussbaum*, Schumann). 66433-4 (two 12in., 5s. 9d. each). *The Trout* (*Die Forelle*) and *Der Musensohn* (Schubert). 62551 (10in., 4s. 6d.).

Three Lieder records by this famous German tenor rouse expectations. They will come under the purview of Mr. Klein in his present series of Lieder articles, and little need be said of them here. Personally I am not thrilled. There is much of the dramatic force and tonal magnificence that one would expect from a noted Wagnerian tenor, but, among other things, the real imaginative power which would really move one seems to be deficient. In the quieter passages he has the distressing habit of never being quite in the middle of his notes, and his tone does not rouse my enthusiasm.

Note that on the labels *The Nut Tree* is wrongly attributed to Schubert, and that the famous *Der Doppelgänger* is given the less familiar and doubtful translation of *The Counterfeit*.

#### HIS MASTER'S VOICE.

**Joseph Hislop** (tenor), accompanied by Percy Kahn : *An Eriskay Love-Lilt* (Kennedy-Fraser's *Songs of the Hebrides*) and *Herding Song* (M. Lawson's *Songs of the North*). D.A.789 (10in., 6s.).

**George Baker** (baritone) with orchestra : *Linden Lea* (Vaughan Williams) and *Ho! Jolly Jenkin* (from Sullivan's "Ivanhoe"). B.2396 (10in., 3s.).

**Walter Glynne** (tenor) : *O lovely night* (Landon Ronald) with violin obbligato played by Marjorie Hayward, and *Phyllida* (Fisher). B.2395 (10in., 3s.).

The popular *Eriskay Love-lilt* by this noted tenor might have been remarkable. Personally I find it almost devoid of sensitiveness, not nearly tender enough. The other song is a beautiful one, and well, if not outstandingly well sung.

Of many records I know of *Linden Lea*, *Baker's* does not make the greatest appeal to me. His emphasis and burliness are much more in place in Sullivan's lively song, in which the orchestral accompaniment is immensely effective.

Anyone who can find a soft spot for *Glynne's* two songs will be enchanted.

I have just had brought to my notice a little book which would provide days, perhaps months, of the most fascinating study to anyone possessed of a gramophone and half-a-dozen song records. The records need not be first-rate, nor even all good; for the point of W. S. Drew's "Notes on the Technique of Song-Interpretation" (Oxford Musical Essays, Oxford University Press, 2s. 6d.) is that he gives what are really (though necessarily based on complete knowledge of vocal technique) plain common-sense, yet detailed analytical reasons why a singer conveys, or fails to convey, his song's message to his hearer.

Mr. Drew remarks that "there is a growing number of teachers [in our own country] who are inconsiderate enough to go contrary to all popular tradition by being very well qualified to deal with the voices of their fellow-countrymen and with the singing of their own language." We know that Mr. Drew is himself one of the number, and in this book he shows that no one is better able than himself to write delightfully on his subject. C. M. C.



## BAND RECORDS

### JANUARY ISSUES AND RETROSPECTIVE

The last half year has been for me personally, and for the whole gramophone world, I think, a most exciting time, as it has seen the old method of recording definitely replaced by the microphonic process by practically all companies. An analysis of one's ideas and feelings during the evolution of this process is interesting. When the first tentative efforts were published a little over a year ago many of them revealed a very distinct improvement at once, but in others the faults seemed so serious as to more than counterbalance the improvements. These faults have gradually grown both less pronounced and smaller in number until the later issues of band records are approaching perfection. This, of course, is largely due to the improvements effected in the recording process, but to anyone who does not appreciate the improvements in reproduction may I suggest the trial on a modern machine of one of the earlier electric recordings which was not thought good at the date of its issue? I have tried several recently with agreeably surprising results. By this I do not mean that the results are necessarily as good as the best of the newer issues, but they are certainly far better than was thought possible quite a short time ago. Twelve months ago I was trying these new records on various machines, both standard makes and others, and though the quality of reproduction varied considerably, in no case was it anything like so good as can now be obtained on any one of half a dozen machines to-day while the results I can obtain from them since Mr. Virtz made me a machine six months ago are a revelation. This machine, with which I use fibre needles, gives an amazing volume and quality to all microphonic recordings without exception, while in conjunction with the best of them it is about as near perfection as ever I hope to get from the diaphragm system of reproduction.

**Brass Bands.**—Although the various versions of *An Epic Symphony* are the most important records published during the period under review, I do not propose to add to the detailed criticism which appeared last month, but will merely reiterate that the best records are Regal G.8689-90, but that my personal choice (in order to have the work without cuts) is Regal G.8690 and Col. 9148. Both these are played by **St. Hilda Colliery Band**, which is the most successful band recording at the present time. Whatever music (or rubbish!) is played and whatever company records the playing, this band always "comes off." The two best perhaps are *A selection of Sir Harry Lauder's Songs* (Regal G.8700) and *Pomposo* and *Giojoso* marches (Imperial 1669). **The Australian Commonwealth Band** have also made a lot of records for various companies of which *The Wounded Friend* and *With Kilt and Sporran* marches (Regal G.8670) is easily the best, and, I am glad to say, the xylophone inanities (or should it be inane xylophonies?) on Aco. G.16096 and Regal G.8701 are equally easily the worst. The solitary record by **Foden's Band** is disappointing in that such fine music as Dr. Keighley's *Midsummer Night's Dream Overture* (Winner 4507), though quite well recorded, is badly cut. I hope, however, that in spite of this, the record has had and will continue to have a good sale. The only remaining records are the three played by **Callender's Cable Works Band** of which the selection from *Les Huguenots* (Winner 4051) is the best, and the one side (*Wide Awake March*), played by **The Scottish Co-operative Wholesale Society's Band** on Aco. G.16113.

**Military Bands.**—In the large output of military band records pride of place must be given to the series played by **Silver Stars Band** for the Regal Company because of the combination of choice of music and excellence of recording. This fine series includes Mendelssohn's *Wedding March* and *The Bridal March* from *Lohengrin* (G.1028), *The March and Pilgrims' Chorus* from *Tannhäuser* (G.1031), *Egmont* (G.8655), *Ruy Blas* (G.8620), and *The Bronze Horse* (G.1037) overtures, and selections from *Madame Butterfly* (G.1029) and *The Gondoliers* (G.1036). These are all so good that individual choice of music need be the only guide

in making a selection. My own view is that the recording of *The Bronze Horse Overture* is the best, but my preference is so slight that I fully expect to find many people in complete disagreement. I have said before, but must repeat that this band seems unable to get quite the best out of a march. The exact failing is not easy to define.

The H.M.V. Company have given us three interesting series of records. The one which has caused most interest and comment is, of course, that played by the two American bands conducted by **John Philip Sousa** and **Arthur Pryor** respectively. Nothing that has been said in *THE GRAMOPHONE* is too high praise for these records. *Under the Double Eagle* and *The Sesqui-Centennial* marches are not quite up to the high standard of the rest, and my vote for the best is divided between *Fairest of the Fair* (B.2370) and the two whistling duets, with band accompaniment, on B.2373. I still, however, retain my preference for the tone of English bands which subordinate brass tone to that of the reeds. The second series is that of selections from the more popular operas of Gilbert and Sullivan, played by the **Coldstream Guards Band**. There are five of these so far, and they are all excellent except for the excessive echoes and reverberations in *H.M.S. Pinafore* (C.1283). Why, however, has the symmetry of the series been spoilt by interpolating an odd ten-inch disc in the middle? Surely there are enough good tunes in *The Mikado* to fill both sides of a larger record! The remaining outstanding set of records is that made at the actual performance of *The Aldershot Searchlight Tattoo* (C. 1268-70). The interest of these records is mainly historic for frankly the records are not good though better than might be expected from an open-air recording made during the extreme infancy of the microphonic process. Far better technically is the set made in a studio by **The Grenadier Guards Band** for the Columbia Company on 9109-10. These records are magnificent, although they lack the authentic and realistic touch of the former. Of the other records made by this band the best are *The Thistle* (9102), *Rienzi Overture* (9086) and last and best of all a delightful selection of *Plantation Songs* (9106) which is superbly played.

The first Vocalion records to be made by the Marconiphone Company's process are so full of promise that I hope I shall be pardoned if I enumerate their faults first. Firstly there is a slight extraneous noise which requires attention; secondly the basses and other deeper-toned instruments need a bit of "fattening," and thirdly the surfaces are rather rough (in my copies, at any rate). The better of the two records issued so far is a tuneful selection from *Tom Jones*. The playing of the **Life Guards Band** is very delicate and it is pleasing to hear the band at something like full strength instead of a mere skeleton of 25 or so. This is most certainly a record to buy. The last few records to be made by the old process have been sweet nothings played very artistically on the cornet by **Trumpet-Major Harman**.

The best Aco record of the half year is undoubtedly that of the evergreen *Poet and Peasant Overture* (G.16094), played by the **Knights of Columbus Band**. The remainder have been chiefly marches and melodious trifles played by the **Welsh Guards Band**, the best of which is *Chang and the Chinese Bell Galop* (G.16048). This record is also issued by the Beltona Company on No. 1608. Other good Beltona records are *Varsity* and *To Victory* marches (1047) by **The Beltona Military Band** and *Stars and Stripes* and *National Emblem* marches (1107), played by **The Westminster Military Band**. These two companies between them have issued quite a collection of good marches, a list of which is worth perusal by those attracted by martial strains.

I do not think that copies of all the military band records made by the Actuelle, Duophone, and Zonophone companies have reached me, but of those I have had an opportunity of hearing I can recommend *L'Etoile Overture* (Actuelle 15235) and *The Gretna Green Ballet Suite* (*Scene and Valse*) (Actuelle 15237), both played in splendid fashion by **The Garde Republicaine Band** and a very fine recording by **The Black Diamonds Band** of *Punjab March* and *The Funeral March of a Marionette* on Zonophone 2793. This record is startlingly loud in some passages.

On the principle that it is always advisable to finish up with something good, I have left until last *Martial Moments*, played by **The 2LO Military Band** (Winner 4432), which is an excellent record, and *Prelude, Chorale, and Fugue* played by **The Scots Guards Band** (V.F. 677). The latter is Abert's arrangement of part of Bach's *Prelude No. 4* (of the 48) and the well-known *Fugue in G minor* with an original chorale incorporated. In spite of the recording being only fair and of a wish for Bach unadulterated, this is a very desirable record for the beauty of both music and playing.

W. A. C.

## MISCELLANEOUS

There is hardly an unfamiliar tune among all these records of light restaurant music, and yet if he could only recapture the sensation of hearing them for the first time, how much fairer a reviewer could be to the excellence of the playing and recording and to the magic of the melodies! If anyone who reads this finds a freshness in any of the titles, let him go ahead and buy the record; he need not hesitate, he will find it lovely, if only with the loveliness that fades. *Scarf Dance* and *Pierrette* (*Chaminade*). *Chanson—In Love and Love Everlasting* (*Friml*), played by the **Plaza Theatre Orchestra** *in situ*, Col. 9157, 12in., 4s. 6d. *Nell Gwyn Overture* (*Edward German*) and *Plymouth Hoe* (*Ansell*), played by the same orchestra, Col. 9167, 12in., 4s. 6d. *Melody in F* (*Rubinstein*, arr. *Sear*) and *Cavatina* (*Raffi*), the **J. H. Squire Celeste Octet**, Col. 4154, 10in., 3s. *Moment Musicale* (*Schubert*) and *Serenade* (*Moszkowski*), by the same, Col. 4194, 10in., 3s. *So I loved, so I lost* (*Cazadon*) and *Odile* (*Novello*), **De Groot and the Piccadilly Orchestra**, H.M.V., B.2389, 10in., 3s. *Serenade Neapolitaine* (*Drigo*) and *Thé Dansant* (*Fletcher*), by the same, H.M.V., B.2397, 10in., 3s. *Sunset on the St. Lawrence* (*Heller*) and *Voices of Spring Waltz* (*J. Strauss*), played by the **Brunswick Concert Orchestra**, Brunswick 3078, 10in., 3s. *Merry Widow* and *Ever or Never* waltzes, played by the **Jacques Jacobs Ensemble**, Col. 9169, 12in., 4s. 6d. *Humoresque* (*Dvorák*) and *Berceuse de Jocelyn* (*Godard*) played by the **Venetian Trio** (violin, 'cello, and harp), H.M.V., B.2394, 10in., 3s. *Serenade* from *Millions d'Arlequin* (*Drigo*) and *Serenade espagnole* (*Glazounov*), played by the **Piccadilly Salon Orchestra**, Aco G.16130, 10in., 2s. 6d. *Moonlight* from *Werther* (*Massenet*) and *Serenade* (*Schubert*), played by **Moschetto and his Orchestra**, Voc. X.9935, 10in., 3s. *Meet me at Twilight* and *A Rose in a Garden of Weeds* waltzes, played by the **Edith Lorand Orchestra**, Parlo. E.5719, 10in., 2s. 6d.

Of these I should pick out Col. 9167, H.M.V., B.2397, and perhaps Voc. X.9935. Add *Spanish Waltz* (*Piattoli*) and *Fides March* (*Piattoli*) on Col. 4160 (10in., 3s.), played with their usual verve by the **Circolo Mandolinistico Giuseppe Verdi of Leghorn**, but not quite so good as the previous records; and, on the score of virtuosity, *Len Fillis* (with *Syd Bright* at the piano) playing the ukulele, Hawaiian guitar, guitar and banjo *en suite* on Col. 4161 (10in., 3s.); and *Alexander Prince* in a concertina *Song Medley* on Regal 8731 and 8732 (10in., 2s. 6d. each). Of the piano records this month the palm goes easily to *Harry Daniels and Peter de Rose in Black Bottom* and *For my Sweetheart* (Imperial 1683, 2s.), with chorus admirably sung by *Irving Kaufman*.

Of duets and such-like I am glad to be able to recommend a really good effort by *Aileen Stanley* and *Billy Murray* in *Bridget O'Flynn* (*Where've ya been?*) with *Who could be more wonderful than you?* on the reverse (H.M.V., B.2392, 3s.). The **Radio Imps** on Imperial 1691 (2s.), the **Happiness Boys** and the **Singing Troubadours** on Actuelle 11232 (2s. 6d.) and **Wilson and Austen** on Beltona 1128 (2s. 6d.) are good in well-worn favourites in familiar style; and one can hardly say more of **Layton and Johnstone** in *Am I wasting my time on you?* and *I'd love to be a baby again* (Col. 4207, 3s.), and in the February list, three more records, Col. 4165, 4166, 4167 (3s. each), or of **Scovell and Wheldon** in *Silver Rose* and *Black Bottom* (Parlo. E.5723, 2s. 6d.). These will be bought by all their admirers.

**Wendall Hall** is welcome back on Brunswick 3331 (3s.) in two capital songs, *Meadow Lark* and *Just a bird's-eye view*. I am suffering from the waning vogue of **Jack Smith** and admire little but the recording of *Loud Speaking Papa* and *When Autumn leaves* (H.M.V., B.2333, 3s.). **Leslie Sarony** only just misses having a very sympathetic way of singing (H.M.V., B.2391, 3s.), but he is a shade too slick. *Moonlight on the Ganges* is sung best of all by **Franklyn Baur** on Brunswick 3318 (3s.) with *Your heart looked into mine* on the other side; and the best version of the *Froth Blowers' Anthem*, *The more we are together*, is, I think, that of **Fred Gibson** on Aco G.16137 (2s. 6d.), with that masterpiece of melancholy, *Dismal Desmond*, sung by **Jack Berry**, on the other side. I have no space in which to enumerate the various versions of popular songs on twenty other records that I have heard, but there is nothing outstanding among them.

**John Henry and Blossom** are extremely good in a rather silly controversy on hackneyed lines about a stocking, (H.M.V., B.2393 3s.), but perhaps not so permanently enjoyable as in the Film Scenario last month.

PEPPERING.

## NEW-POOR RECORDS

ACO.—First of these I put John Thorne's BARITONE song, *Bonnie George Campbell* (2s. 6d.). He has done nothing better, and the recording is *forward* to a degree. A PIANOFORTE recording of medium strength, but great charm, is *Naila Waltz* (2s. 6d.), played by Maurice Cole.

BELTONA.—An excellent BARITONE song most forwardly recorded is Howard Fry's performance of *Come to the cook-house door* (3s.). An equally good BASS recording, *The end of the road* (2s. 6d.). A really beautiful POPULAR SONG, *While the Sahara sleeps* (2s. 6d.), sung by John Roberts. A BASS song, *Drinking song*, from Flotow's "Martha" (2s. 6d.); it is sung in Italian. Melancholy IRISH SONGS sung well by a contrafiddle and having piano and violin accompaniments, *Has sorrow thy young days shaded* (2s. 6d.). A MILITARY BAND disc of two numbers from Sousa's *Dwellers in the Western World* suite (2s. 6d.); it shows some drum tone.

HOMOCHORD.—A wholly delightful record by the now well-known small MILITARY BAND is Fletcher's *Woodland Pictures* (2s. 6d.). An ORGAN setting of *Londonderry Air*, arranged by Stanford (2s. 6d.).

H.M.V.—A GRAND ORGAN record showing magnificent 32-foot tone and everywhere full enough to drown surface noise is *Old Hundredth*, transcription (4s. 6d.). Ballet Suite, ORCHESTRAL, *Peer Gynt* (Grieg), conducted in the very best English style by Goossens (two discs, 9s.).

PARLOPHONE.—A very important issue that no follower of ORCHESTRAL music will dare to miss is the whole *Casse Noisette* suite of Tchaikovsky on four discs (18s.). The make-up of the orchestra or perhaps the placing of the microphone is so entirely different (as affecting the balance produced) from that at Covent Garden, to say nothing about the difference in the styles of Moerike and Goossens, that everyone who buys the *Peer Gynt* suite should also get this one for purposes of comparison if for no other reason. An ORCHESTRAL record also by the Berlin Opera House, but on a single disc, is the *Bartered Bride* overture, Smetana (4s. 6d.). LIGHT ORCHESTRA, *La Serenade*, Métra (4s. 6d.), played by Edith Lorand, who also has Vitali's *Chaconne* as a VIOLIN SOLO (4s. 6d.). Those who support the talented Linde family in their performances, at Haslemere and elsewhere, of early classical music on the antique instruments the music was written for, will welcome the HARPSICHORD record of Scarlatti's *Pastorale* (4s. 6d.). SOPRANO: A record by Emmy Bettendorf, sung in German, *Ozean du Ungeheuer* from "Oberon" (4s. 6d.). This is easily the best record made by this singer, and bears out my prophecy that electric recording would negative all the faults in her earlier records. The incomparable Ronnie Munro dance records comprise *Lido Lady Selection* (2s. 6d.), *But not to-day* (2s. 6d.), and *In a little garden*. A pair of beautiful WALTZES played by Edith Lorand, *Meet me at twilight* (2s. 6d.).

REGAL.—Wonderful VIOLIN playing for half a crown is Manuello's. His *Ballet Music*, *Rosamunde*, must not be missed.

VELVET FACE.—A wonderful four-shilling *Una Voce*, sung in Italian by Gwladys Naish, SOPRANO. TENOR, *Lohengrin's Narration*, sung in English to a good orchestral accompaniment by Dan Jones (4s.). *Vale*, a pretty TENOR song (2s. 6d.).

WINNER.—SACRED: An excellent series of hymns by a vocal quartet, a tenor taking the melody and an organ accompanying. Clearness of enunciation has been obtained; *Praise to the Holiest* (2s. 6d.). SPEAKING: An exceedingly amusing monologue, *Reggie's Rhetorics* (2s. 6d.).

ULTIMATE SELECTION.—ORCHESTRAL: *Peer Gynt* suite (H.M.V.) and *Casse Noisette* suite (PARLO.). SMALL ORCHESTRA: *La Serenade* (PARLO.). VIOLIN: 12in., *Chaconne* (PARLO.); 10in., *Rosamunde* (REGAL). GRAND ORGAN (32-foot tone): *Old Hundredth* (H.M.V.); 8-foot tone, *Londonderry Air* (HOMO.). MILITARY BAND: *Dwellers in the Western World* (BELTONA) and *Woodland Pictures* (HOMO.). SOPRANO: *Una voce* (V.F.). TENOR: 10in., *Vale* (V.F.); 12in., *Lohengrin's Narration* (V.F.). BARITONE: *Come to the cook-house door* (BELTONA). BASS: *Drinking song* (BELTONA). PIANOFORTE: *Naila Waltz* (ACO.). HARPSICHORD: *Pastorale* (PARLO.). UNCOMMON RECORD: *Black Bottom* (IMPERIAL). SPEAKING: *Reggie's Rhetorics* (WINNER). WALTZ: *Meet me at twilight* (PARLO.). DANCE: *In a little garden* (PARLO.).

H. T. B.



## DANCE NOTES

By M. W. W.

In the following brief notes all are fox-trots unless otherwise described. (V.) means that there is a vocal refrain.

ACO (2s. 6d. each).

The February list is very good throughout. The best is G.16138, *Tinker Tailor* (out of "Happy go Lucky"), fox-trot, and *Here in my Arms* (out of "Lido Lady"), fox-trot, played by Harry Bidgood's Orchestra. The rest are:—

G.16141.—*I never knew what the moonlight could do* (V.) (The Old Virginians) and *In a little garden* (V.) (The Cleveland Society Orchestra).

G.16142.—*Don't take that black bottom away* (V.) (The Ohio Novelty Band) and *Sunday* (V.) (The Club Maurice Orchestra).

G.16139.—*Mock the mocking bird* (V.) and *How many times* (V.) (Harry Bidgood's Orchestra).

G.16140.—*Because I love you* (waltz, V.) and *Any ice to-day, lady?* (V.) (Harry Bidgood's Orchestra).

ACTUELLE (2s. 6d. each).

The playing of Victor Stirling and his band is as good as ever, but I fancy the recording for January is not quite up to standard as regards body of tone. 11212, *While the Sahara Sleeps* (V.) and *Silver Rose* (out of "Blackbirds"), played by Victor Stirling and his band, is the best.

11209.—*Everything will happen for the best* (piano solo) and *Don't forget* (V.) (Victor Stirling and his band).

11210.—*The more we are together* (V.) and *Let's all go to Mary's house* (V.) (Victor Stirling and his band).

Special attention should perhaps be drawn to the first record of "The Trebla, the All-British Non-Sequence Ballroom Dance." This is 11222, *The Trebla* and the *Chilo-Trebla*, played by Albert's Dance Band under the personal direction of Miss Nora Chilo and Mr. Albert Barnett, the originators of the dance.

BELTONA (2s. 6d. each).

Here are three thoroughly good records, the best being 1130, *Tell me you love me* with *Lavender Waltz* on the reverse side, both played by the Southern States Dance Band.

1120.—*In a little garden* (V.) and *While the Sahara sleeps* (V.) (Sunny South Dance Orchestra).

1132.—*Because I love you* (waltz, V.) and *Sunday* (V.) (Virginia Dance Orchestra).

BRUNSWICK (3s. each).

It is always a pleasure to try Brunswicks. These records are not only good, but they provide an interesting contrast in the settings and renderings of dance music by our American friends, as against those of our own bands recording in this country. Some of the fox-trots are on the slow side as we reckon things over here, but such records as 3333, *I want to be known as Susie's feller* (V.) and *I lost my heart in Monterey* (V.), played by Isham Jones's Orchestra, and 3327, *I'll fly to Hawaii* (V.) and *That's my girl* (V.), by Joe Green's Novelty Marimba Band, take a lot of beating. The passages of marimba and steel guitar in this latter record are very pleasing indeed and will enchant those who prefer listening to dancing. Here are the rest:—

3353.—*When you waltz with the one you love* (V.) and *Stars are the windows of Heaven* (V.) (Ben Selvin and his Orchestra). Two nice waltzes, well played and sung.

3360.—*Kiss your little baby good-night* and *Desert eyes* (V.) (Jules Herbiveaux' Palmer House Victorians).  
 3335.—*It made you happy when you made me cry* (V.) and *Meadow lark* (V.) (Isham Jones's Orchestra).  
 3317.—*Beside a garden wall* (V.) and *Wistful and blue* (V.) (Abe Lyman's California Orchestra).  
 3341.—*Bobadilla* (V.) and *Pepita* (V.) (Park Lane Orchestra).  
 3324.—*What's the use of crying* (V.) and *Tell me to-night* (V.) (Charley Straight and his Orchestra).  
 3339.—*Scatter your smiles* (V.) and *Lay me down to sleep in Carolina* (V.) (Vincent Lopez and his Casa Lopez Orchestra).  
 3323.—*No one but you knows how to love* (V.) and *Gone again, gal* (V.) (Bennie Krueger's Orchestra).  
 3286.—*Sunday* (V.) and *Havin' lots of fun* (V.) (Abe Lyman's California Orchestra).

## COLUMBIA (3s. each).

In answer to our plea in December for a real honest-to-God "Blackbirds" record by their very own band, Columbia gave us in January the two fox-trots, 4185, *Smiling Joe* and *Silver Rose*, cleverly played by the Plantation Orchestra. The rhythm and spirit are most refreshing after the dry monotony of the usual records. I want more of them. Other good January records are:—

4144.—*Everything will happen for the best* and *Cross your heart*, and 4145, *Don't forget* and *Beautiful baby*, four good fox-trots out of "Queen High" and played by Percival Mackey's Band.  
 4184.—*A tiny flat near Soho Square* (V.) and *Here in my arms* (V.) ("Lido Lady") (Percival Mackey's Band).  
 4173.—*Every little maid* and *Babyin' you* ("Princess Charming") (Percival Mackey's Band).  
 4151.—*I've never seen a straight banana* and *While the Sahara sleeps* (V.) (Percival Mackey's Band).

## HIS MASTER'S VOICE (3s. each).

I am glad to think that of the January records I had chosen B.5176, *I wonder why* and *Do I love you?* as the best of the bunch before I heard of the lamentable death of Bert Ralton in South Africa. The record is by the Savoy Havana Band and is notable for its good playing and rhythm and also for what seems to me a novelty, the singing of the chorus at the very beginning, charmingly done. Whether Bert Ralton had anything to do with this record or not does not matter; the fact remains that his name is indissolubly connected with the Havana Band, and if, as some say, his day was over, nothing can detract from the memory of the stupendous work and energy which he put into the band at its beginning, and of the debt which innumerable followers of his leadership owe to him. R.I.P.

Of the other January records I recommend:—

B.5175.—*Beside a garden wall* and *I'd rather be the girl in your arms* (Savoy Orpheans). Good tunes for dancing.  
 B.5179.—*Scatter your smiles*, good rhythm, and *I'm in love with you* (waltz) (Jack Hylton's Kit-Cat Band).  
 B.5178.—*Sunshine of your smile* (waltz), an old favourite, and *Picardy* (Savoy Orpheans).  
 B.5174.—*Crazy Quilt* (Charleston fox-trot) and *Cuckoo* (Jack Hylton's Kit-Cat Band).  
 B.5180.—*As long as I have you* (J. Hamps Kentucky Serenaders) and *Falling in love with you* (waltz) out of "Happy go Lucky" (B. F. Goodrich).

Of the February H.M.V.'s eight records, easily the best is B5184 *Waiting for the Rainbow* (Jack Hylton and his Orchestra) and *Flapperette* (Hylton's Kit-Cat Band). Personally I prefer the latter. Then B5190 *Kentucky Lullaby* (Jesse Crawford's organ, with Goldkette's Brok-Cadillac Orchestra), a sensuous and attractive waltz, and *I wish you were jealous of me*, waltz (Nat Shilkret and the Victor Orchestra) in which the bells are rather trying. The rest seem to me undistinguished:—

B.5185.—*Just a bird's-eye view* and *Sunday* (V) (Jack Hylton's Kit-Cat Band).  
 B.5186.—*Roses for Remembrance* and *When it was June* (waltz) (Savoy Orpheans).

B.5187.—*Oh, how I love Bulgarians* (Savoy Orpheans) and *Blondy* (Savoy Havana Band).  
 B.5189.—*Mandy* and *Hello! Bluebird* (V) (Jack Hylton and his Orchestra).  
 B.5188.—*Then all the world is mine* and *The whole town's talking* (Jack Hylton and his Orchestra).  
 B.5183.—*Jog, jog, joggin' along* and *The more we are together* (V) (Jack Hylton and his Orchestra).

## IMPERIAL (2s. each).

I admire the enterprise of Imperial in having secured Geoffrey Gelder and his Kettner's Five, a very clever combination which is popular with wireless enthusiasts, and well worth trying by every one who does not already know them. All four January records are good for dancing, and I put them in this order:—

1685.—*Black Bottom* and *I wonder what's become of Joe* (V.). Brilliantly handled by Joe Candullo and his Everglades Orchestra.  
 1686.—*Lonely Acres* and *Waiting* (Geoffrey Gelder and his Kettner's Five).  
 1684.—*Cryin' for the moon* and *Baby face* (V.) (The Buffalodians).  
 1687.—*The more we are together* (V.) and *Everything will happen for the best* (Geoffrey Gelder and his Kettner's Five).

## PARLOPHONE (2s. 6d. each).

As usual our dancing readers will thoroughly enjoy all the Parlophones for this month. Not only are the records themselves good, but the punch and rhythm that the bands put into their work are of a very fine order. Particularly in E.5713, *But not to-day* (V.) and *It all depends on you* (V.), two fox-trots out of "Lido Lady," played by Ronnie Munro and his Dance Orchestra, and E.5716, *Sadie Green* and *Crazy Quilt*, two fox-trots by the Goofus Five. E.5717, *I'd love to meet that old sweetheart of mine*, fox-trot (V.), and *She's still my Baby*, fox-trot (V.) (Araby's Garden Orchestra). E.5718, *Only a broken string of pearls*, waltz (V.) and *Whispering Trees*, waltz (V.) (Parlophone Salon Orchestra), two nice waltzes, but it is a pity that the voice appears to be recorded too close to the microphone. E.5714, *In a little garden*, fox-trot (V.), and *I've never seen a straight banana*, fox-trot (V.) (Ronnie Munro and his Dance Orchestra). E.5715, *She belongs to me*, fox-trot (V.) (Gotham Nightingales) and *For my Sweetheart*, fox-trot (Mike Markel's Orchestra).

## REGAL (2s. 6d. each).

I find the surface of these records a little rough, which is unusual. From the January list I select G.8743, *Here comes Malinda* and *Moonlight on the Ganges* (piano solo), played by the Raymond Dance Band; G.8763, *Here in my arms* (V.) and *That tiny flat near Soho Square*, two good tunes out of "Lido Lady," played by the Raymond Dance Band; and G.8745, *Hello Baby* and *Sunny Swannee*, by the Raymond Dance Band. These are the most worthy of note.

## VOCALION (3s. each).

This month these records are a fairly even lot, though I consider that X.9940, *Just a bird's-eye view* and *I can't get over a girl like you* (V.) and X.9941, *Prehaps you'll think of me* (V.) and *I've never seen a straight banana* stand out, owing chiefly to the excellent workmanship of Billy Mayerl and his Vocalion Orchestra.

X.9939.—*Don't sing Aloho when I go* (V.) and *Hello! Bluebird* (V.) (The Riverside Dance Band).  
 X.9938.—*Black Bottom* and *For you and me* (V.) (The Riverside Dance Band).  
 X.9942.—*I'd rather be the girl in your arms* (V.) and *When you waltz with the one you love* (waltz, V.) (The Riverside Dance Band).  
 X.9943.—*Here in my arms* (out of "Lido Lady") and *I still believe in you* (V.) (The Riverside Dance Band).

## ZONOPHONE (2s. 6d.).

Only one record this month, but it is a very good one, 2856 *Up jumped the Devil* and *I can't get over a girl like you*, played by that new institution, the Devonshire Restaurant Dance Band: a trifle shrill and night-clubby, but full of punch and rhythm.

# MARGINALIA

(Continued from Vol IV., page 32)

By HAROLD F. BISS

## 8. *Danzas Fantasticas*. Turina.

The two most representative composers of the modern Spanish school since the death of Albeniz and Granados, are undoubtedly Manuel de Falla and Joaquin Turina. Pervaded as their works are by an intensely national spirit, it seems difficult indeed for the hearer to realise that such spirit is not conveyed by any adherence to the characteristic mannerisms of Spanish folk-tunes, but by means of an exceptionally brilliant and adaptable technique acquired in the case of each composer outside his own country.

Turina was born in 1882 and is a native of Seville. After a short course of study there he proceeded to Madrid and afterwards to Paris, where he studied composition under Vincent d'Indy. Having gained, during his stay in Paris an European reputation as a composer of unusual brilliance, he returned in 1914 to Spain. His works are many and varied, perhaps the best amongst them being *La Procession du Rocio*, which I briefly described in an article I wrote for THE GRAMOPHONE in May, 1925, as being particularly well suited to the then existing methods of orchestral recording. Now that electrical recording has been introduced I cannot imagine many things sounding purer than the clean harmonic outlines of *La Procession*. Other compositions of Turina include his *Sinfonia Sevillano*, *Piano Quintet*, an *Escena Andaluza* for string quartet, viola, and piano, a violin sonata, and the charming piano solo, *El puerto*, recently recorded by the Columbia Co.

The *Danzas Fantasticas* is intended as an illusive tone-painting, the material having no definite literary objective other than Turina vaguely suggests by prefixing to the score of each dance a quotation from José Ma's novel, *La Orgia*.

(1) *Exaltacion*.—After a brief introduction violins *con sordina* announce a slow rhythmic figure followed by descending tremoli which soon give place to the dance proper, which opens into a vivacious melody for the *cor anglais* against a tonic-and-dominant setting for the bass. The intensely Spanish melody is taken up by the oboe and afterwards by the flute and clarinet. Following a climax a second melody, *poco meno*, is given out by strings, wood-wind, and horns, the tempo gradually slackening to a pause followed by a strong *fff* chord. The dance theme returns at this point, the thematic structure being subjected to what might be termed a "transfusion" of themes—a master-stroke of harmonic skill and tone-colouring. The three introductory bars once more occur, the music gradually softening to the most delicate *ppp* before fading to a close.

(2) *Eusueño*.—After a rapid exotic introduction, the dance is given out by the horns in the unusual time of 5/8. The violins attempt to assert a theme, which is interrupted before it is developed by another, after which the music seems to possess no definite intention until, after two gong notes, it is given to the wood-wind. This is followed *allegretto* quasi *andantino* by a new theme softly sung by violins and violas with a restrained passion, the flutes presently introducing a counter melody. Three trumpets (muted) then revert to the 5/8 section, which after a short development ends on the two gong notes. This is the finest dance of the three, the atmosphere being charged with an intoxicating sweetness that is so seldom found in contemporary musical art.

(3) *Orgia*.—The opening bars are scored for full orchestra and given out with fiery energy. The main theme is announced by strings and wood-wind, the other instruments forming a solid background and leads after a powerful

development to an equally energetic second theme. The dance slackens, but, following a tremendous crash on the cymbals, immediately resumes.

A delightful pianissimo subject is now introduced by the violas, having one of the most exquisitely lilting melodies it is possible to imagine. After a short dialogue for the flute the first subject again occurs, fiercely as before and works up to a tremendous climax, *più vivo*. The 'cello offers a mere suggestion of the lilting theme before the dance ends in a rapid concluding passage.

## 9. *The Flight of the Bumble Bee*. Rimsky-Korsakov.

This little orchestral piece is one of the most charming operatic episodes that came from the pen of Russia's great composer, Rimsky-Korsakov. The opera, *The Legend of Tsar Saltan*, deals with three hermit sisters and the Tsar. Coming upon a lonely hut one day, the Sultan is surprised to find three sisters. He falls in love with and marries Miltirissa, the youngest, giving the other sisters high positions at his court. While the Tsar is absent his wife gives birth to a son, which gives the sisters a chance to satisfy their jealousy by poisoning the Tsar's mind against Miltirissa. They send word to him that his wife has borne him a monster, whereupon he sends word that she and her son shall be nailed into a cask and thrown into the sea. The Tsar's orders are carried out, but the cask founders and the victims are left on a lonely island. The Prince grows into a handsome man, and reigns over a magic city that has risen from the ocean and falls in love with the Princess Lybeda.

The Flight of the Bumble Bee occurs in the third act, where a bumble bee is sent from the island to blind the wicked sisters with its sting. The muted strings give a wonderful impression of the insect's flight. While a detailed analysis is unnecessary by reason of the orthodoxy of the scoring, it is so frequently included in concert programmes that it may not seem out of place to mention it here.

HAROLD F. BISS.



## The H.M.V. Catalogue

The simplification of the 1927 catalogue is a distinct success. After reading the brief instructions "How to use this Catalogue" on page 3, anyone could find his way about the following 380 pages. Operas have been restored to their alphabetical position instead of being grouped, as last year, under their composers' names, and the operatic titles from the "crimson rambler" and "evergreen" sections are now included in the main catalogue. This is all to the good. A hundred pages have been saved by the simple expedient of not telling you what is on the reverse of the record that you want, but you have only to turn to the performer's name and you will find it there at once. This is perfectly sound cataloguing. It was also wise not to cut down the group headings, which are very useful. How otherwise could one ever find all the Hebrew records or Negro Spirituals or Sacred Songs and Hymns or Chamber Music? The dates in catalogue No. 2 (evergreens) are very interesting too. Dan Leno, recording in 1900, is the doyen.

## Vocalion and Aco

Since the beginning of the year the distribution of Vocalion and Aco records in Great Britain has been taken over by Perophone Ltd., 76-78, City Road, London, E.C.1. So if you have any difficulty in obtaining any of these fine records reviewed in THE GRAMOPHONE you know where to apply to.

## TRADE WINDS AND IDLE ZEPHYRS

### Urgent

Please note the invitation to Murdoch's Salons on Thursday next announced in the N.G.S. Notes, and do not forget to bring the coupon. The Editor hopes to meet all his old friends and many new ones, and to convince them that the N.G.S. records on a Balmain gramophone are worth hearing.

### Gilbert and Sullivan

Thanks are due to all the volunteers who offered to write articles on Gilbert and Sullivan records. The pleasant task has been allotted to Mr. N. O. M. Cameron, of the British Museum, and any information about rare records, etc., should be addressed to him, c/o THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, Frith Street, London, W. 1, so that no stone may be left unturned in the effort to make the articles complete.

### Hear Hear!

The following extract from a letter from an overseas reader who contributes a weekly gramophone page to the leading paper in his country deserves quotation and endorsement: "I, too, have a habit of telling the truth about a record (a rare thing in this country), and although the companies do not relish being told an issue is not good, I must say that most of them have been as sporting as your advertisers. The gramophone trade all over the world evidently consists of broad-minded and far-seeing business men."

### Corrections

A slip in Mr. Porte's article, "Beethoven and Mozart v. Haydn," in the Christmas Number is pointed out by Dr. Francis Mead. The "Paukenschlag" Symphony of Haydn, played by the Opera House Orchestra under Leo Blech (Polydor), is the same as the "Surprise" Symphony, and not distinct from it, as Mr. Porte suggested. The notorious muddle in the cataloguing of Haydn's symphonies misled our contributor.

Another correspondent, Mr. Gorman, corrected the assertion of Mr. J. C. W. Chapman in the last number (Notes and Queries 469, page 352) that the piano accompaniment in *Minuit* (Voc. K.05260) attributed by the label to Mrs. Hobday is a polite fiction. It is not; Mrs. Hobday can be heard, on a good gramophone, playing the chords for the midnight chimes. Mr. Chapman gracefully accepted the correction, saying that he now understands why Sir Arthur Sullivan made such a song about the Lost Chord.

The record is a fine test for your machine!

### Gramophone Societies

As announced by the Editor in the last number, the reports of gramophone societies are omitted this month and at last we are able to start the Forum again. In justice to the contributors to the latter it should be mentioned that their articles have been in storage for a long while.

### Apollo Spreads

As announced last month in this column, Messrs. Craies and Stavridi were hard put to it to cope with the growing sales of their Apollo gramophones. They now announce additional premises at 129, Bunhill Row, with a floor space of 6,500 square feet. This should help to relieve the pressure, and they will be able to let those cramped intestinal horns out for a stretch occasionally.

### Musical News

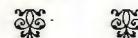
The first monthly issue of the *Musical News and Herald* (6d.) is a great improvement on the familiar weekly numbers, and a great credit to its publishers, the House of Curwen. A leading article on the "Debits and Credits" of music at the present time gives a very fair appreciation of the situation. Which great music publishing firm will be the first to have all its copyright works recorded for the gramophone and sold over the counter like sheet music?

There is an interesting note, too, about the International Jury of five which has been gathered in London last month to select, from two hundred scores submitted to them, the programmes for the next annual festival of the International Society for Contemporary Music. They were Walter Straram, from Paris; Philipp Jarnach, from Berlin; Alois Hába, from Prague; Dr. Rudolph Simonsen, from Copenhagen; and Louis Gruenberg, who

is an American; and they found time to be entertained by (among others) Mr. W. W. Cobbett, the valued member of our N.G.S. Advisory Committee, and Miss Ursula Greville, who has promised to contribute a note on our Christmas Symposium to THE GRAMOPHONE, and whose latest recital was given at the Wigmore Hall last Tuesday.

### Nicolai Nadejin

The recital given by "our" Russian baritone at the Aeolian Hall on January 18th was a great and comforting success. He was in fine voice and gave groups of old Italian songs, German lieder and modern Russian songs, accompanied by Gerald Moore, except in the last group, when Madame Korchinska, that exquisite harpist, supported him. In her solo playing of Mozart, Scarlatti, Faure, Debussy and Prokofieff, Madame Korchinska made something of the same impression of wondering delight on the audience as Segovia recently in the same hall with his guitar. Can these things be recorded adequately?



## THE GOOFUS FIVE



A casual remark in last month's Dance Notes—that the Goofus Five are "the best of recording dance bands, for dancing purposes anyhow"—is a tardy recognition of the merits of this remarkable combination. The first of their Parlophone records was issued in March, 1925, and the twelfth of the series is issued this month, *Crazy Quilt* and *Sadie Green* (the Vamp of New Orleans), on Parlo. E.5716 (2s. 6d.). Dance fans have secured every one of the series, realising that what the Parlophone catalogue calls "really mean strutting numbers as featured by the hottest of all dance combinations" are in a class by themselves.

Adrian Rollini, the leader, who plays the bass saxophone, doubles on nine different instruments outside the saxophone family, and is the most famous bass saxophone player in the world; just as the celebrated Trumba, the solo saxophone player, is unrivalled throughout the world in "hot" modern saxophone playing, and Miff Mole, the trombone player, is undeniably supreme in his own sphere. But "Red Nicholls," the trumpet player, is the star of the band, for it is he who created the new style of trumpet-playing copied by every band in the world.

The "Goofus" style is almost inimitable because it involves a very rare virtuosity in the players. It is the control over their instruments—and breathing control, too—which make possible their conjuring tricks, such as the "hot brakes" which they invented (when the band stops and a soloist performs a sort of cadenza). But it is not merely this virtuosity which endears them to the connoisseurs; it is the almost incredibly subtle rhythmic urge, which has to be felt to be imagined.

This may sound nonsensical praise, but it will be endorsed by the best judges. The proof of the playing may not lie entirely in the salaries; but it is significant that each player commands a fabulous price, and Red Nicholls signed a contract over a year ago to join a New York band at a salary of, roughly, £200 a week.

# THE GRAMOPHONE IN SCHOOL

## A NEW FEATURE *conducted by W. R. ANDERSON*

**I**N an earlier article I spoke of the lack of graded records for use in teaching younger children. Shortly afterwards "His Master's Voice" informed me that a scheme for the production of a series of such records is already in hand. I congratulate the Company upon this new pledge of their active and fruitful interest in musical education, and commend to the attention of readers this new series, about which we shall doubtless hear more when the considerable labour of making a sufficient number of records has been accomplished. I am sure that the common defects of so many records will be avoided—that, for instance, we shall not have placed before those amazing imitators, young children, any wobbling voices or bad pronunciation.

Some points that have come up in various letters from kind correspondents may perhaps suitably be considered this month.

One or two express doubt whether the gramophone can sufficiently convey "personality," and suggest that its use may lead to a mechanical habit of receiving music, comparable to that which some people believe is induced by listening to wireless music. I think the matter of personality (in the sense of viewing the performer) matters less to children than to most grown-ups, who have, by reading and hearing about artists, and by gazing at their portraits in the picture papers, come to take their place obediently in the queue of those who go to see a musician rather than to hear him (or her—it is generally her). Children are attracted by personality, but by personality in function other than the musical. As one reader notes, "They (boys in this case) always respond to a good artist." "Chaliapin," he adds, "is tremendously popular." That is so, but my correspondent gets nearer the truth when he goes on: "Perhaps I should say they appreciate a good *performance* rather than a good *artist*." That is, they think less of the actual person who is performing—of the glamour of what is loosely known as "personality," and more of his style—the way in which he handles his tools and drives home his message.

The only caution needed here is that the great artist sometimes "plays about" with the music. I have heard Chaliapin, for instance, sing a Mozart song in a very un-Mozartian way; yet he made the song live, and gave it dramatic excitement—of his own peculiar brand. I should strongly dissuade any student who felt inclined to copy him; but, on its own ground, the reading was effective. If any of your records show the artist

taking striking liberties, be sure that you safeguard the music by a word as to artistic license, its limits and responsibilities.

That leads to a suggestion as to the treatment of children in a music class. The ideal attitude of the teacher is that which takes the class as a normal part of the school's work, neither making out music to be a semi-sacred thing, nor trying to make the lesson too much of a recreation-hour. Children appreciate a business-like attitude in any lesson, and, though they may not give words to the thought, they like to feel they are learning something definite. In A. H. Sidgwick's clever book, "The Promenade Ticket" (Arnold), one of the elements in the enjoyment of the intelligent man at a Queen's Hall Promenade Concert is expressed as the feeling—"What jolly intelligent people we are to be able to understand this." I have always felt that this legitimate thought might be gently stimulated, not in any snobbish way, as a thing that is to separate one from those benighted souls who do not appreciate the subject, but as a little reasonable encouragement of oneself for effort well and truly made. The appreciator ought to pursue his effort, when it has brought him noticeable pleasure. He ought to link it up with other efforts and so strengthen his present stock of knowledge; and he ought to make such personal efforts to perform as lie within his reasonable compass.

There the teacher may powerfully affect his students. The school life and work of most of them may leave little room for musical practice and performance, but all teaching with the gramophone ought to go hand in hand with the encouragement of personal effort. This is most conveniently made, by most young people, by means of the voice. There ought to be no fear in the minds of any school officials or parents who are willing to encourage the use of the gramophone that this will mean the diminution of personal effort by the children, either in their school musical work in other ways, or in their home practice. It all depends upon the school teacher's right insistence on balance and proportion.

Of one thing I am convinced. Far too much emphasis has been laid, and by some parents still is laid, upon the mere performance of a few piano-forte or violin pieces. There one has to remark that too many teachers of music have rather weakly pandered to the parent's desire for audible and readily-understandable results from private music lessons. One has only to hear the average

young married woman sing or play (particularly perform at sight—that important sign of musicianship) to realise how much time had been frittered away in the five or more years of private lessons from, say, ten to fifteen. There are much brighter hopes nowadays. Teachers are becoming more active-minded. The competition festivals are reshaping ideas, and bringing about a healthier outlook on music. Both parents and children are hearing more performances; and the latter are hearing very much more music than that which they alone can perform.

To this last point I have before referred, and I repeat it because I feel it is so important. If the child is to become really musical he *must* hear a great deal of music. The supreme value of the gramophone, the pianola, and wireless lies in the fact that by their aid he can do this; and parents and teachers must make all possible use of these means, to that end.

Another point that it will scarcely be necessary to emphasise in addressing practising teachers is that in music, as in other subjects, children like to be talked to in plain terms, and, particularly, that they dislike to be talked down to. There is a slight tendency, one finds, to try to make musical talks simple in a rather childish way; and few children, except very tiny ones, care to be talked to thus. By all means use all reasonable analogies, drawn from the pupils' experience in other school subjects, and in sports. (Some of the best analogies in technical matters concerning performance, such as playing the piano or singing, can be drawn from physical actions in sport.) But I conceive it a pity to go a long way round in order to avoid a technical term. When half-a-dozen of these are known, one can get along much faster. Children are accustomed to memorising and interlocking facts in all their other work. Let them exercise their minds in like manner in music lessons. They will link up music with other topics the more readily, and will be more inclined to do what we wish—to regard music as a subject in which any decently-educated person must bear his part and be able to find his way about, just as he does in history and mathematics.

That brings up the point that quite a lot of useful and really enlightening facts about the development of music can be got into music lessons with the gramophone—or without it. A well-stored mind in the teacher is, of course, necessary. A wise man will beware of trying to expound the sometimes rather obscure course of events in any art unless he has a good idea of the relations of the various movements and events. It is by no means difficult for one accustomed to use his mind so actively upon many subjects as is the average school teacher, to acquire a useful knowledge of the main outline of music's progress, and of the

clear characteristics of its leading figures. The series of books on composers and history that Mr. Percy A. Scholes has issued (Oxford Press) form the readiest and most commonsense guide with which I am acquainted, through this side of the subject.

Another correspondent asks if it is not found that the earlier "classical" music—that up to Bach's time—is a little less liked by beginners than that of Beethoven and later composers. I think there is something in this, and I should not, in an early course, attempt to start at the beginning of music's history. It is a very young art, but until one has found one's feet in it a little the earliest manifestations are found a little "dry." A suite of Bach, such as that I mentioned in my last article (Col., L.1684 and 1685), or that of Handel (L.1437 and 1438), will have a readier success than one of Byrd or Bull. I should not, therefore, attach too much importance to historical sequence. Something gaily coloured, such as Borodin's *Prince Igor* dances (just re-recorded by Columbia), a dainty, dashing thing like the last movement of Haydn's *Hornpipe* quartet (Col., D.1444), a bit of *Hänsel and Gretel* (H.M.V., D.591), or some of the delicious *Beggar's Opera* tunes (Col. or H.M.V.)—all these are sure to go down finely, if well presented. One need not be afraid of becoming enthusiastic about the music; and as the real music-lover never lacks that quality, he can let himself go now and then in warm praise of something fine, and so enjoy himself and encourage his pupils to do the same. The balance must, of course, be held between the "Now this is good music, and you must like it" attitude and the "Let's have a jolly time and let the 'learning' side take care of itself" plan. I cannot, however, conceive much good coming of any kind of music teaching that is not frequently warmed by the fire of genuine enthusiasm and admiration for fine art, in the teacher; and I should feel sorry for anyone who was compelled to teach music without being able, at least now and again, to feel a glow of delight in some of his examples.

In early stages one must do everything possible to find attractive pieces. In the background looms ever the all too solid and maleficent spirit of poor, tawdry music, with which the children are surrounded from the cradle to the grave. This feeble stuff is superficially attractive; and to say to young people that "it doesn't wear" means little to them. They cannot be expected to pore over problems of wear and tear, of values spiritual and mental. Perhaps they ought to do so, but most of them don't. A good deal of the problem of the school music teacher, therefore, seems to me to lie in this discovering the balance of interest and education, in presenting always good music that is attractive, in making sure that it is well performed (and that

the children learn, as they go along, wherein the quality lies, both in the music and its performance); and in safeguarding the young folk, as far as we can, from the weakening influence of unworthy art.

In further articles I hope to suggest some more records that experience has shown are of value, and also to ask one or two other teachers of wide experience to write something about the special directions in which their work has taken them, and in which they have achieved notable success. Meanwhile, as regards the choice of records, may I, as one keenly believing in the aims and policy of the National Gramophonic Society, commend it to the consideration of all who read this? The new system of membership opens the door to all, and the records, both those already issued and those to come, contain many pieces that the

teacher will find of the utmost value. To some of these I shall refer in another article, but as the new membership plan is available immediately, and as it is devised with particular attention to the needs and resources of such folk as do me the honour to read these articles, I very strongly recommend investigation of its provisions at once.

W. R. ANDERSON.

(*To be continued.*)

NOTE.—By arrangement, and for the better dissemination of this series of articles amongst school authorities, Mr. Anderson's monthly articles are appearing also in the first issue of each month of *Education*, the official organ of the Association of Education Committees.



## ARMCHAIR PHONATICS

By P. WILSON

### On the Complacency of Wives and the Perversity of Gramophones

OUR gramophone fans seem to have developed a theory that wives are indifferent to real musical values and are interested only in appearances and novelties. But that is a base slander. Of course, I can only speak for one or two wives and they are very complaisant and long-suffering. I hardly dare recall the number of occasions upon which I have asked my wife "if she didn't think that was better." Of course she didn't; nor was it. It rarely is, save that much thinking makes it so. Soon, thank goodness, it will no longer be necessary to ask them to choose between loyalty and sincerity. Means can now be devised for measuring the value of any reproduction with as much scientific precision as we can measure the speed of a motor-car. We owe this to our electrical friends who devised the new recording.

I well recollect the smile of half-amused tolerance on Mrs. Mackenzie's face when the Editor and the Expert Committee were turning the house at Jethou into a sort of laboratory. I know that smile well. It means something like this: "Really these men are little more than grown up children; they must have their toys and play their little games; no doubt they will get over it some day." Some of us never do get over it, but that doesn't matter. So long as our womenfolk are allowed to mother us all is well.

I was unfeignedly grateful to Mr. Simons some two years ago when he entertained us all with that delightful caricature of our gramophonic life—

"Gramomania." It was so exactly like myself that I read it aloud to my wife, and she with great glee had to take it round and read it to her mother, her sisters, her friends. Since then, whenever I have been more than usually absent-minded, or have made a bigger mess than usual in the drawing room, the likeness to Mr. Simons' gramomaniac has been so apparent that all has been well. On the strength of this I have been able to re-arrange furniture to my heart's content and to litter tables, piano and floor with gramophones, sound-boxes, gadgets and other odds and ends; I have obscured the walls from time to time with reflectors, sounding boards, resonators and the like; I have rigged up special heating apparatus and weird and wonderful contraptions, including a skeleton Balmain machine, complete with open mercury baths.

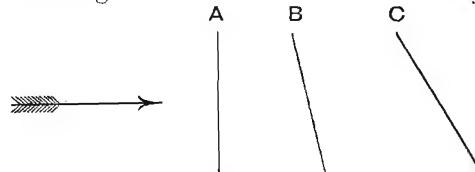
One of my experiments last year was particularly troublesome in the disarrangements of furniture, etc., which it entailed. Every experienced gramophile knows that some days everything goes wrong; the tone is dead and lifeless, fibres will not stand up, sound-boxes blast, steel needles grate and so on. But so far as I have been able to discover, no two people seem to agree upon the most suitable conditions for good reproduction. One says hot weather is the best, another cold; one prefers dry weather, another swears by damp; one likes a room with a northern aspect, another fancies one facing south. My own experiments, however, seem to show that none of these things really matter.

I was impressed at the start with the fact that the gramophone almost invariably sounds better late at night. It is not so much that things are quieter then, though of course that has something to do with it. It is possible to get quietness during the day-time and still miss that clean, resonant effect which is so impressive. Then again I had observed that the reproduction at a gramophone society which I attend fairly regularly was definitely better between 9 and 10 p.m. than between 7 and 8 p.m. But I think I got the most valuable clue one evening when I turned down the gas-fire in my drawing-room, opened the doors to disperse the "fug" and went into the dining-room for supper. On my return the gramophone played very much better than before. I did the same thing again the following week and got precisely the same result. This naturally made me run through everything that I could think of to account for the difference. In the end I came to the conclusion that the condition for good reproduction is that the upper part of the room should be at an appreciably higher temperature than the lower half. That, of course, is naturally the case late at night when the fire has been allowed to get low and there are few rising air currents. I have tested this explanation in every way that I can think of and in no case have I failed to obtain support for it. In that form, however, the rule was not necessarily of general application. It might be bound up in some way with the conditions in which I normally play the gramophone, and indeed I came to the conclusion that it was. I usually use an external horn instrument with the horn at a height of about 5 or 6 feet so as to avoid damping effects from the heavily upholstered furniture. The room is about 20 feet long and 12 feet across and the gramophone is in a corner at one end. Even the particular corner of the room makes a difference. The best corner is one which backs on to the kitchen fireplace; that is always fairly warm and apart altogether from the effect on the sound, the motor runs better in those conditions. Sound-boxes too like to be kept warm and dry, but of this I will say more anon.

To elucidate the question a little further it is necessary to refer to two features in the propagation of sound. The first is that sound travels more quickly in warm air than it does in cold air, and the second is that it travels with a wind better than it does against the wind. Now during the day-time, and even at night, when there is a large fire burning, the air at the floor is hotter than that at the ceiling and since hot air is lighter than cold air there is a continuous upward draught. Late at night the temperature of the air increases from the floor to the ceiling and there is no appreciable air current either upwards or downwards.

Let us consider what happens to a wave of sound

issuing from the horn. During the day the upper part of the wave is travelling in colder air than the lower part and therefore moves more slowly. If a wave front is in a given position as at A at a given instant, the lower part gains on the upper and the front tends to swing round to the positions shown at B, C. That is, the sound tends to rise to the ceiling.



(When soldiers in line turn a corner those at the inner files mark-time whilst the outer files swing round.) Late at night the converse is the case. The upper part of the wave is moving in warmer air and thus gains on the lower with the result that the sound bends down towards the ground where you and I, of course, are usually listening. The same phenomenon is well illustrated by the remarkable horizontal carriage of sound on a clear frosty morning when the layers of air at the surface of the earth are much colder than those above. On a hot summer's day, on the contrary, the temperature of the surface layers may be much higher than that of the higher layers and sound does not carry nearly so well.

The air currents have a similar effect. When there is a continuous stream of rising air, as when a large fire is burning, the sound will tend to travel upwards very quickly, particularly if the gramophone is placed near the fireplace. A draught between the door or window and the fireplace will have a corresponding effect. For this reason alone the position of the gramophone in the room is a matter of some considerable importance. It should be our object to arrange that the sound fills the room as quickly and with as little reverberation as possible. The principles I have outlined above enable us to do this with a fair amount of certainty. Next month I propose to trace out a few of the consequences of these principles, and to indicate more precisely what points it is well to look to in choosing the place for the gramophone and in obtaining good conditions in which to play it.

P. WILSON.



### *Lifebelts and Weight Adjusters*

The Christmas season had its effect on our supply of these necessary commodities. We ran out of stock; the new stiffened type of Lifebelt took longer to make than one would have thought possible, and as for the Weight Adjusters, a whole batch of them was left too long in the nickelling bath and had to be scrapped.

Apologies to all readers, patient and impatient, who have been disappointed. They shall be satisfied as soon as we can possibly get supplies.

# CREDE EXPERTO

## By OUR EXPERT COMMITTEE

### SOUND-BOXES FOR ELECTRIC RECORDS

JUDGING from the letters received during the past few months, most readers are finding that the problem of record wear has assumed a tragic importance since the advent of electric recording. We are constantly being asked to advise what should be done to avoid the trouble. Many correspondents appear to think that all they require is some magical new sound-box, others are prepared to go to the expense of a new tone-arm as well, whilst a few would like to have complete designs for sound-box, tone-arm and amplifier, the latter, of course, to fit their existing cabinet. We regret to say that we have not been able to satisfy these demands. Indeed, our study of electric recording has made it clear that many of them are quite incapable of satisfactory answer. In previous articles we have explained that by the electrical system of recording it has now become possible to record over a much larger musical range than hitherto; in the bass especially the range has been considerably extended. Reproducers which can manage the old records quite comfortably may therefore be quite hopeless with the new. The large majority of gramophones will not respond at all to very deep bass notes. With them the energy which should be sent out in low-pitched sounds simply expends itself on the record. Mr. Wilson pointed out in the Christmas number that bass notes have a much greater amplitude than treble notes of the same loudness; to avoid undue record wear a reproducer not only has to be able to respond to a much deeper bass than before; it also has to react to much greater amplitudes.

Fortunately, the principles upon which electric recording is based have given us a complete theory of reproduction as well. This theory has thrown light upon some points which have hitherto been obscure, and it is our purpose during the next few months to discuss a number of them. Our immediate object, however, is to describe certain methods which we have found to succeed in designing and tuning sound-boxes for electrical recording. In this we shall make use of a memorandum we have received from a reader in Italy, Mr. A. Anson, upon tuning a sound-box of "Exhibition" type. Mr. Anson's methods agree generally with those we have been accustomed to use for old recordings, and many of them are of quite general application.

One or two points must be borne in mind from the start. The theory referred to above has made it quite clear that a gramophone horn (or radio

loud-speaker) will only transmit sounds down to a certain frequency. This critical frequency depends not only upon the length and shape of the air-column but also upon the area of the open end. We understand that Mr. Wilson will deal fully with this question in the near future. Here we will only remark that to reproduce, *through the air column only*, the deepest bass notes at their full value would require a horn much larger than any that has hitherto been used in this country. The italics are important. We have reason to know that it is possible to transmit the lower frequencies through the *material* of the horn. But, like violin-making, the design of an amplifier with that property is largely a matter of individual skill. We may remark, however, that shelves or "louvres" at the opening of the horn have the property of transmitting lower frequencies than the open air-column. That they have some other, and undesirable, effects is doubtless true; but whether these are sufficient to outweigh the advantages is by no means so certain as some of our friends would have us believe.

Another point we wish to emphasize is that a sound-box tuned to one amplifier may be quite hopeless with another of different size. The air-column of every horn has a resistance—or, more accurately, impedance—to the passage of sound-vibrations through it, corresponding to the impedance of a wire to the flow of alternating electric currents. As we go along we shall indicate the points where the amplifier affects the design of the sound-box. We shall not, as a rule, be able to give quantitative results. But when once the nature of the effect has been determined, the proper measurements are not very difficult to find by actual practice.

(To be continued.)

### Repairs

*I can repair any make of Gramophone Motor, however old. You can see your own motor being repaired.*

**W. R. COLLIER**

(20 years' practical experience on the bench)  
15, Little St. Andrew Street, Upper St. Martin's Lane,  
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ALL PARTS STOCKED. Sound-Box Weight Adjusters Stocked.

# National Gramophonic Society Notes

(All communications should be addressed to The Secretary, N.G.S., 58, Frith Street, London, W.1)

## SHORT NOTICE.

By the courtesy of Messrs. Murdoch, the showrooms at 461, Oxford Street have been placed at the disposal of the Editor for a demonstration of N.G.S. records, and of the gramophone horn designed by Mr. P. Wilson for the Expert Committee, at 7 p.m. on Thursday next, February 3rd.

The accommodation is not unlimited, but any reader who brings the coupon on page xxvi., filled in with name and address, will be admitted. The new N.G.S. records will be played and Mr. Compton Mackenzie will speak upon the work of the Society and other gramophone subjects of the day.

## A Central Gramophonic Society

The following extract from a letter from a member may appropriately lead to a discussion at Murdoch's salon on Thursday next. Will any members who have views on the subject and who will not be able to be present write to the Secretary at once, so that a general estimate of the probable support for such a society may be made at the meeting?

"... I am strongly of opinion that the new scheme of the National Gramophonic Society is a move in the right direction, but would personally go further by the formation of a central gramophone society at which the records of the N.G.S. could be demonstrated, say, quarterly. There is an urgent need for a central society with headquarters in the West End—access to a restaurant and within easy reach of all parts of London. Such a centre could not fail to achieve success and to serve as an educational medium to potential recorded music enquirers. Many gramophone fans I have discussed the subject with are in complete agreement, especially if connected in some manner with the N.G.S., as the average man of to-day feels he would prefer an aural demonstration in every case before purchase. It would be interesting to know the views of your readers on the suggestion, and I wish to say that if the venture met with any fair response I would be glad to subscribe a guinea towards initial expenses.—TYRO."

## This Quarter's Records

The second batch of records for this season are now ready and will be despatched towards the end of the month.

Beethoven's *Quartet in F major, Op. 135* (three 12in. records, NNN, OOO, PPP), played by the Spencer Dyke String Quartet.

Brahms's *Trio for Pianoforte, Violin, and Horn, in E flat, Op. 40* (four 12in. records, QQQ, RRR, SSS, TTT), played by York Bowen, Spencer Dyke, and Aubrey Brain.

Vaughan Williams's *Phantasy Quintet* (two 12in. records, EEE, FFF), played by the Music Society Quartet and Jean Pougnet.

Goossens's *First Violin Sonata, Op. 21, Slow Movement (Molto Adagio)* only (one 12in. record, GGG), played by André Mangeot and the composer.

Of these works only the Beethoven and Brahms will be reckoned as part of the normal programme (24 records) of the year and will be sent to those members who have asked for 24 records and no more. The "whole-hoggers" will receive all ten records.

## Record M

If any members can spare their copies (in good condition) of the record containing the end of the Schubert trio on one side and the beginning of the Schönberg sextet on the other, they would be helping other members who want it. The Secretary will pay 5s. and postage for record M. Similarly there are several enquiries for the whole set of Schönberg records (M, N, O, P), if anyone wishes to dispose of it.

## Please Note

Beethoven's *Quartet in F minor, Op. 95*, will not be recorded by the Society this year, as information has been received that it is on the programme of one of the recording companies. Judging by the letters received by the secretary this work should have a warm welcome when it appears.

## Comments on the Schubert and Purcell Records

"The Schubert records arrived safely and words fail me to express the pleasure this superb music has afforded me."—W. D. TAYLOR.

"It is a joy from beginning to end... It is a milestone on the path of progress. Bravo!"—Dr. ERNEST FOWLES.

There is a notable improvement over previous N.G.S. records in the matter of sonority. The Schubert work is probably familiar to most musicians, but the Purcell pieces are real "finds," delightful in texture, and far more fresh and genuinely original than much of the queer stuff turned out a few weeks ago.—*School Music Review*, December 15th, 1926.

The latest issues of the Society consist of Schubert's *String Quartet in A minor* and the *Scherzo* from Mendelssohn's *E minor Quartet*, the latter taking the tenth side in the five discs employed; and a couple of fantasias by Purcell. The Spencer Dyke Quartet plays the Schubert and Mendelssohn, and the Music Society's String Quartet the Purcell. The Society has come into line with the electrical recording, apparently, for there is a notable increase in power. Quality is as good as ever, so these records are about the best produced by the N.G.S. The surprise, musically, is the Purcell records. Their originality, striking harmony (chiefly due, of course, to bold polyphony), and depth and variety of expression rank these Fantasias amongst the notable gramophone records of the year. The astounding thing is that such treasures should be new to us. I believe that to most musicians they are as much a "find" as anything among the Elizabethan revivals. In fact, when I read, in the April, 1926, "Music and Letters," André Mangeot's article on this part of Purcell's output, I thought his enthusiasm led him to exaggerate. But I see now that he was right; it is, as he said, music of "astonishing beauty." The N.G.S. has now given us four of the Fantasias, and there can be no better justification for the Society's existence than this issue of works which recording companies are hardly likely to touch. Let us have the rest as soon as possible. (I believe there are about twenty!) "Discus" in *The Musical Times*, Jan. 1st, 1927.

## The N.G.S. Chamber Orchestra

Our first venture in orchestral recording was a hazardous business but through the goodwill and energy of everyone concerned there is promise of really fine results. It will be sheer bad luck if the records do not rank with the best of their kind. M. André Mangeot took infinite trouble to get together an orchestra worthy of the occasion, a most difficult task in which Mr. Victor Watson helped him, and it was extremely typical of him that in the recording room he gave the baton to that brilliant young conductor Mr. John Barbirolli, and was content to lead the orchestra himself, except in the Mozart symphony. Members who are in a position to judge will appreciate the strength of the following list without any comment.

*First violins* : André Mangeot, John Fry, A. Ayckborn, J. Price.

*Second violins* : George Whitaker, V. Allchurch, V. Leonard, J. Rosenthal.

*Violas* : L. Rubens, L. D'Oliviera.

*Cellos* : J. Leonard, J. Moore.

*Basses* : Victor Watson, Charles Winterbottom.

*Flutes* : Robert Murchie, Gordon Walker.

*Oboes* : Horace Halstead, J. McDonagh.

*Clarinets* : George Anderson, A. N. Tschaikov.

*Bassoon* : Jack Alexander, E. Duboucq.

*Horns* : Aubrey Brain, Frank Probyn.

*Trumpets* : E. Hall, H. Barr.

*Piano* : Ethel Bartlett.

The Corelli *Christmas Cantata*, Debussy *Danse Sacré* and *Danse Profane*, and Warlock *Serenade for Strings* were for strings only. The two first each made three sides, which was rather a nuisance, but could not be avoided—three records in all. Members will therefore have to buy them all or none.

In the Debussy the part which was originally written for an instrument then in vogue in Paris, the chromatic harp, was played on the piano by Miss Bartlett. This is usually done when the work is performed nowadays, as the chromatic harp is practically obsolete.

The composer, Mr. Peter Warlock, was good enough to attend a rehearsal of his *Serenade for Strings* and to approve the tempo,

about which there has always been some doubt. This imprimatur gives a valuable authority to our record.

The full orchestra, without the piano of course, recorded the Mozart *Symphony in C major, No. 22* (K.200), on two 12-inch records, a movement to each side, and the Delius *Summer Night on the River* on one 12-inch record.

It is too early to say whether any re-recording will be necessary, before the Advisory Committee and M. Mangeot and Mr. Barbierelli are satisfied; but it is not too early for us to offer our very real thanks to all those who entered with so much keenness and unselfishness into our enterprise.



## CORRESPONDENCE

*De Gustibus Non Est Disputandum.*

[All letters and manuscripts should be written on one side only of the paper and should be addressed to the Editor, *The Gramophone*, 58, Frith Street, London, W.1. The writer's full name and address must be given. A stamped envelope must be enclosed if an answer or the return of the manuscript is desired. The Editor wishes to emphasise the obvious fact that the publication of letters does not imply his agreement with the views expressed by correspondents.]

### FAVOURITE TUNES.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—Your letters from celebrities concerning their favourite composers, etc., were extremely interesting. Their selection of favourite "tunes" in many cases struck me as being rather curious. May I append herewith what I consider to be the greatest melodies in the world?

1. *Intermezzo*, "Cavalleria" (Mascagni).
2. *Ah! fors' è lui*, "Traviata" (Verdi).
3. *Tacea la notte*, "Trovatore" (Verdi).
4. *Mon cœur*, "Samson et Dalila," second melody (Saint-Saëns).
5. *Méditation*, "Thaïs" (Massenet).
6. *Pilgrim's Chorus*, "Tannhäuser" (Wagner).
7. *Isolde's Liebestod*, "Tristan" (Wagner).
8. *Scherzo*, *Symphony No. 5* (Beethoven).
9. First Theme, First Movement, *Violin Concerto* (Mendelssohn).
10. *On Wings of Song* (Mendelssohn).
11. *Largo*, *Symphony No. 5* (Dvorák).
12. *Humoreske* (Dvorák).
13. First Theme, First Movement, *Violin Concerto in D* (Tchaikovsky).
14. First Theme, First Movement, *Piano Concerto* (Schumann).
15. *Etudes Symphoniques* (Schumann).
16. First Theme (sixteen bars), Fourth Movement, *Symphony No. 1* (Brahms).
17. Second Theme, Third Movement, *Piano Concerto in C minor* (Rachmaninoff).
18. *Che farò*, "Orfeo" (Gluck).
19. *Largo*, "Xerxes" (Handel).
20. *Knowest thou the land?* "Mignon" (Thomas).
21. *Mélodie in F* (Rubinstein).
22. *Serenade* (Schubert).
23. *Softly Sighs*, "Freischütz" (Weber).
24. *Mermaid's Song*, "Oberon" (Weber).
25. *Lasson Theme*, *Second Hungarian Rhapsody* (Liszt).
26. *E lucevan le stelle*, "Tosca" (Puccini).
27. *Even bravest heart*, "Faust" (Gounod).
28. *Nocturne, Op. 9, No. 2* (Chopin).
29. *Le Cygne* (Saint-Saëns).
30. First Theme, First Movement, *Sonata in A* (K.331) (Mozart).

One of the most beautiful pieces of sustained melodic writing is, I think, the *Choral* from César Franck's *Prelude, Choral et Fugue*. In the list given above, No. 15, the lovely theme which serves as the basis for Schumann's *Symphonic Studies*, is not, of course, by Schumann at all, the theme being given to him by a doctor who was a friend of the Schumanns.—Yours, etc.,

Ealing.

JOHN E. KITE.

### A CHALLENGE.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I see by the latest advertisements of the Panatrophe that that machine, which is not a gramophone, will reproduce

"an amazing wealth of detail hitherto unsuspected in any record and unrevealed by any gramophone."

As a believer in the virtue of the gramophone, if scientifically constructed, as compared with the loud speaker, in which category the Panatrophe may be placed, I have assured the Company which is advertising this new electrical wonder that I am prepared to demonstrate to any critic they may choose that the Balmain will give a more accurate rendering of any recorded music than will the Panatrophe.

This, as a preliminary to a few words concerning Mr. Wilson's article on electric reproduction. I am with him in thinking that the future lies with that system, but not for quite the same reasons. Your readers may remember that I said regarding the pleated diaphragm that it would die of its own inertia. Die it did; and the reason why I said it would die is the same reason which impels me to say that no electrical system, which depends in its final issue on the working of a large and heavy diaphragm, will ever equal in purity and accuracy the purely mechanical reproduction possible on a well-constructed gramophone employing a small and light diaphragm. This is such an absurdly simple law of nature that one would think it should be unnecessary to state it. It is not so, however, as is evidenced by the increasing number of large-diaphragmed loud speakers on the market. They are an improvement on the wretchedly designed horns which they have displaced, but they are inferior to a well-designed horn with an efficient small diaphragmed sound unit. Once more, as in gramophone practice, hardiness will oust correct principle.

It must not be forgotten that these alleged electrical reproducers of gramophone records are in the final stage as purely mechanical as are gramophones of the ordinary type and are therefore subject to the same natural limitations.

I therefore have no other option than to believe that, until an inventor comes forward with some quite new method of producing sound-waves electrically, any device which depends on the movement of a large diaphragm will give results inferior to those already obtainable by purely mechanical means.

I refuse to be deceived by the "atmosphere" and "original volume" of the big diaphragm. Detail and purity are of far more importance to the music lover.—Yours faithfully,

Ashtead.

C. BALMAIN.

### THE SUBLIME PORTE.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—Mr. Porte's open letter in the January issue may be intended as a specimen of the higher criticism with which he proposes to regale the cultured neophyte, but it reads uncommonly like a piece of gratuitous impertinence offered to a section of his fellow contributors, many of whom are possessed of attainments and credentials far less open to question than his own, and who are

devoting hours of valuable time and energy to solving the problems and smoothing out the difficulties which are actually being experienced by those for whom Mr. Porte professes such solicitude. It does not appear to have occurred to Mr. Porte's excited mind to ask himself what it is that the "cultured music lover" is most likely to require on first becoming addicted to the "unfortunate gramophone." It is not likely that he will be without a fair knowledge of the flood of criticism which has been poured over music from the time of Schumann and Berlioz down to the intermittent trickle from Mr. Porte's own pen. The only thing that can safely be predicated is that he will probably be as ignorant of gramophone technics as Mr. Porte himself, and since musical appreciation is not invariably associated with practical common sense, it is likely that he will welcome the guidance in such matters which can be afforded by even a "gadget crank." He will probably soon realise that although his education may enable him to distinguish between a bad and a good performance, as he hears it, it will not enable him to decide whether the badness is due to the playing, recording, or merely to a cracked diaphragm. The gramophone is, after all, not a musical instrument, but a machine for the reproduction of music, and, although it is now almost fool-proof, there are fools who cannot even remove a sound-box from a tone-arm without breaking it.

There is plenty of room for sincere criticism of all kinds, for the scholarly musician, the technician, and even the "amateur of equally wild enthusiasm and criticism." The only person for whom there is no demand in gramophone or any other literature is the charlatan who, conscious of the precariousness of his own reputation and the shallowness of his own knowledge, is naturally inclined to view that of others with jealousy and suspicion.

Yours very truly,

Purley.

LIONEL GILMAN.

## EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS.

[Apologies are herewith offered to the correspondents concerned if the blue pencil has foreshortened the perspective of their views. They have themselves partly to blame.—LONDON ED.]

### RECORDING STANDARDS.

Your article, "1926," in the December issue raises such a number of points of vital importance, that I consider it behoves every gramophile who believes that *real* music can be adequately rendered by the gramophone, to rouse himself and insist that the recording companies should broaden their views a little, stir up their imagination, and by looking back over what they have accomplished in the past, come to a realisation of the retrogression that is taking place at present, in spite of the great noise that is being made to the contrary. Expensive records are still being released month by month, but they are becoming less and less worth the price asked. Why? Because the technical aspect is given predominance over the artistic one, and records are released and the public is expected to buy them because they are "wonderful reproductions," "triumphs of recording"—but are none the less only too often, musically, worthless trash. . . . The public is accused, in effect, of being too mean to pay for the "best"; is this really the case, or does not the reason rather lie with the product itself? I think that the answer to this question might fairly easily be found if the companies concerned would turn up the sales records of any discs that have possessed sufficient merit to represent honest value—and I am not disputing that there have been many. But there is another factor that must be robbing the "Celebrity" recordings generally of no small part of their success as a commercial proposition; I refer to the too extensive reissuing of already existing numbers under the "fetish" of the moment—electric recording. To mention but one example—this month H.M.V. offers us *La Calunnia* from Rossini's "Il Barbiere di Siviglia," rendered by Chaliapine; last month they offered us the same number by Journet, whereas actually there was no need for either, both artists having already made recordings of this aria at a time when their respective voices were better than they are now. For the old version by Chaliapine (D.B.107) I have nothing but admiration, and the seldom recorded *In questa tomba oscura* of Beethoven on the reverse side makes it, to my mind, a far more attractive proposition than the new disc. Your suggestion that some of the old matrices might be brought out again and pressings

reissued at 2s. or less seems an excellent one, and, provided that common-sense is exercised in the selection of the titles worthy of being thus resuscitated, why not also a profitable undertaking? A special label should meet the objection raised that the companies concerned might lose prestige, and there ought to be no necessity for all agents to carry full stocks. The H.M.V. Catalogue No. 2 was a step in the right direction, but the records therein contained are, beyond question, priced far too optimistically—a flat rate of 5s. for d.s. 12in. and 3s. 6d. for d.s. 10in. would, I suggest, be nearer their actual value, and yet surely still constitute a commercial proposition.—W. H. LOUGHAN, London, W. 11.

### COMPLETE OPERA.

A correspondent, in the September number (p. 442), enquires about the series of complete operas issued by H.M.V. and Columbia. I am happy in the possession of six out of the nine H.M.V.'s and one of the Columbia, and through repetition I know every bar and phrase of the music and in some cases almost every word of the libretto. I have the scores and libretti and know where omissions have taken place. . . . My calling in life takes me all over the world, and I get much opportunity of hearing and buying almost every make of record, many of which are unobtainable in England, and also frequent hearing of actual performances of the actual operas whose records are here discussed.

The attitude of the British public to opera, generally speaking, would appear to be apathetic ignorance. . . . Certain it is that the gramophone public are mostly unaware that complete records of opera exist. I am on sure ground here, as I have often asked for these records round and about the British Isles, and have nearly always found that the assistant had no knowledge whatever of any operatic records other than the red labelled celebrity voice displays, which are very little else, the orchestral part coming in as though wireless from some great distance.

In contrast to this, on the continent and even in places in China, one enters any H.M.V. shop and asks for any record from a complete series and gets it as a matter of course. There's a constant demand for them. But, then, there people know they exist. In Britain it is only in the few places where one can obtain the operas complete, and if one asks for an isolated disc it is denied. You must buy the lot or none. . . .

Stand forth and give a reason, the man who says that "Rigoletto," a junior opera to "Trovatore," should be perpetuated and its older brother, so near akin, should be forgotten. I wonder if the supercilious people who speak of "early Verdi, of course" (*vide* THE GRAMOPHONE), are aware that these three twin brothers, "Trovatore," "Traviata," and "Rigoletto" are being constantly performed on the continent, and are very dearly and deservedly loved there. In Germany the audiences seem never to tire of them. They—the operas—come round in constant rotation. It was there I last heard "Traviata." A packed audience listened breathlessly. (How dared they!)

It is now nearly a year ago since "Papageno" had the temerity in the correspondence columns to tell the readers of THE GRAMOPHONE that "Il Trovatore" had been recorded *ad nauseam*. From his point of view he was right, but what he must have meant was that *Il balen*, *Miserere*, *Ai nostri monti*, and a couple of others had given him nausea. For, O lovers of truth, what else has been recorded from "Trovatore"?

And now, for the benefit of enquirers, the six H.M.V. operas which I know are (a) "La Bohème," (b) "Faust," (c) "Pagliacci," (d) "Rigoletto," (e) "Tosca," and (f) "Traviata."

(a) is absolutely complete and magnificent.

(b) is absolutely complete but for a couple of bars or so in last Act. A bit scratchy, but otherwise splendid.

(c) is absolutely complete and exceedingly efficient but for a couple of blasts, and an additional disc of, say, Alma Gluck's record should be provided of the ballatella in Act I., which is bad.

(d) is absolutely complete and as near perfect as anyone has the right to expect from a disc.

(e) is absolutely complete and is absolutely perfect. I have heard the original eight times, and know.

(f) is absolutely complete and exhilaratingly well recorded. I have listened to this almost immediately after an actual performance, when it sounded even better than usual.

The Columbia records of "Carmen" are far from complete and a long way from perfection. It is possible to enjoy them when in an uncritical mood. If only Columbia would do them again, complete with the new process!—"MELOCHORD," Colombo.

# THE FORUM

The following articles are unsolicited contributions from readers, dealing with this or that aspect of the gramophone to which each has given thought. A selection from the MSS. received is published every month, and prizes are offered every quarter. Articles should not exceed 1,500 words, and should be typewritten or written **very** legibly on one side only of the paper. They should be sent to THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, Frith Street, London, W. 1., marked "The Forum": and a stamped and addressed envelope should be enclosed.



## AN AMERICAN RECORDING

By H. L. WILSON

THE Victor people, at times, do some unaccountable things. They so seldom completely record a work of any size that when one does come along it is an event. One might naturally suppose that in any policy embracing the recording of long works for the orchestra they would first attack the music of the immortals; in other words, educate their public with some Beethoven or Brahms. Not a bit of it. When they go in for something complete, they religiously ignore the three B's in favour of the modernists. For instance, after months of supplementary issues embodying only "saccharine" morsels, we have thrust at us—totally unprepared as we are—a complete recording of Ernest Schelling's *A Victory Ball*, a conception as modern as any. Personally, I am grateful to have it, and these few words are merely by way of remark upon the Victor's way of doing things.

There are two double-sided ten-inch red seal records (Nos. 1127 and 1128), recorded by the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, under the direction of William Mengelberg. An electrical recording, and with instrumental tone similar to that to which we are becoming acquainted. Enormous volume and splendid interpretation.

Mr. Schelling is an American (born in 1876), although he received his musical education in Paris and Switzerland. As pianist he has toured a great deal and is well known in the States and South America. The list of his compositions includes a symphony, a violin concerto, and several suites for orchestra. The first performance of *A Victory Ball*, fantasia for full orchestra, was by the Philadelphia Orchestra in 1923. It was played again in 1924 by the Boston Symphony Orchestra under the baton of the composer.

At the time of its first performance Mr. Schelling wrote to Mr. Lawrence Gilman, the accomplished editor of the Philadelphia Orchestra's programme books, that he had just returned to New York in 1922 from Europe still very much under the impression of the war, and much troubled for the future. He was amazed to find that so few seemed to remember what the war really had meant, with its great sacrifice of life and youth and sinister associations of blood and shrapnel. He remembered, too, the seething masses of humanity at the cabarets. While in this mood he came across Alfred Noyes's poem, *A Victory Ball*, and was impelled to use it as the basis of an orchestral fantasy.

In this work the composer has made use of two army bugle-calls, the "Call to Arms" and "Charge"; these usher in the War Vision (which commences on side three). At the very end of the composition he has used "Taps." In his letter to Mr. Gilman, Mr. Schelling goes on to say that he had occasion during the war to hear the Scotch Pipers, and to observe the extraordinary effect their music had on the troops. Nearly at the end of his fantasy, Mr. Schelling, to use his own words,

has "tried to make the whole orchestra a huge bagpipe, perhaps the most pagan and primitive form of music." The piece is inscribed "To the memory of an American soldier."

Mr. Gilman remarks that the composer has conceived his tone-poem—which is, by the way, a perfectly free fantasy with, however, a certain amount of development, especially in the first section—as a bacchanal traversed by a vision; an apparition, he calls it, of troops marching on "irresistibly, inexorably. Nothing stops them—not those that fall by the way, not those whose fate is written in fiery, stormy skies. On they march to victory or disaster with—in either case—desolation, suffering, death."

After a short introduction the music evokes the ballroom and its heedless, swirling crowd, the crash of the cymbals, the shrieks of the instruments, and the dancers of the poem with "long silk stockings and arms of chalk." Here is portrayed an impressionistic view of a ball scene, the "Victory Ball," where, "under the dancing feet of ox-eyed matron and slim white girl," are the graves of the dead men "whose shadows stand by the wall—watching the fun!" A brilliant polonaise is heard, snatches of fox-trot and waltz, tangled skeins in which a sinister thread—the communings of the shades—is ever prominent.

"What did you think we should find," said a shade,  
"When the last shot echoed and peace was made?"  
"Christ," laughed the fleshless jaws of his friend,  
"I thought they'd be praying for worlds to mend."

Suddenly, abruptly, the ball-room scene of gaiety disappears. The Vision of the Marching Hosts—those valorous and forgotten dead who "sacrificially laid the world away"—is ushered in. The approach of these ghostly legions is announced by the two trumpet calls referred to above; and to the rattle of the drum and tramp of marching feet, a great host passes by. No orderly crowd of trim soldiers this, but a long straggling line of war-broken men. I know of no other music so grim, so full of portent. Amidst the tumult the "Dies Irae" is thundered out by the brass, and the procession gradually fades away in the distance. But the memory of those stricken souls is not effaced for long. The wild excitement of the dance again breaks in with its giddy motion, its flaring lights and gaudy scene, and reaches a climax. The Procession again. But this time it is the Scots and their bagpipes. Not a very realistic portrayal this, but an impressionistic one nevertheless. There is a great climax wonderfully worked up, and then a diminuendo. From the distance the trumpeter sounds "Taps" . . . and all is silence.

It is not great music, but will repay study. It is very interesting and Mr. Schelling has painted his picture in colours that tell.

# RECORDS OF VERDI'S "RIGOLETTO"

## By THOMAS A. MOWL

I AM sure that all who are interested in opera appreciated the valuable article in The Forum for last May, contributed by Mr. Marchant, on Puccini's *La Bohème*. In my opinion *Rigoletto* is the best of Verdi's operas, though perhaps *Aïda* is the most perfect of his, if not of all, operas. The following is my choice of the best recorded versions:—

### ACT I.

*Questa o quella* (the Duke). Tom Burke, Col. 7346. The next best version is that of McCormack, H.M.V., D.A.498, with *Dai campi dai prati* (*Mefistofele*), recognised as one of his finest recordings.

*Signor! va, non lo niente* (duet, *Rigoletto-Sparafucile*). Cesare Formichi and Ferando Autori, Col. D.1488. A splendid duet; Formichi at his best.

*Pari siamo* (*Rigoletto*). Stracciari, Col. X.312. Undoubtedly the finest; his rendering is convincing and dramatic. The reverse is the *Barcarolle* from *La Gioconda*, which makes one realise Stracciari's artistry.

*Deh non parlare al misero* (duet, *Gilda-Rigoletto*). Magrini and Ruffo, H.M.V., D.B.175. Excellently sung by this little-known soprano.

*Figlia! mio Padre!* and *Veglia, o Donna* (duet, *Gilda-Rigoletto*). Bronskaja and Blanchart, Col. A.5180.

*E il sol dell'anima* (duet, *Gilda*—the Duke). Bronskaja and Constantino, Col. A.5183.\*

*Caro nome, che il mio cor* (*Gilda*). Galli-Curci, H.M.V., D.B.257. I have heard this aria sung by three of the greatest sopranos—Galli-Curci, Barrientos, and Scotney. In my judgment the first is the best.

\* The best version of this, sung by Galli-Curci and Schipa, is on Victor 3034 and is not easy to obtain in England.

### ACT II.

*Ella mi fu rapita* (the Duke). Hislop, H.M.V., D.A.226. *Parmi veder le lagrime* (the Duke). Caruso, H.M.V., D.B.126 (No. 2 Catalogue).

*Cortigiani, vil razza dannata* (*Rigoletto*). Stracciari, Col. 7325. This is sung with colour and feeling, and never an approach to exaggeration. The famous *Largo al factotum* is coupled with it. Titta Ruffo also sings this very well, H.M.V., D.B.175.

*Tutte le feste* (duet, *Gilda-Rigoletto*). Bronskaja and Blanchart, Col. A.5183. This and the duets in Act I are perfectly sung. I admire all Bronskaja's records; she challenges comparison with Destinn.

*Pianeti, fanciulla* (duet, *Gilda-Rigoletto*). Galli-Curci and de Luca, H.M.V., D.A.381. One of the best duets recorded, a sound investment. Scotney and Rimini on Voc. A.0194 are very good also.

*Si, vendetta, tremenda vendetta* (duet, *Gilda-Rigoletto*). Lulu Hayes and Battistini, H.M.V., D.A.189. A splendid record of vocal passion by two great artists.

### ACT III.

*La donna è mobile* (the Duke). Tom Burke, Col. 7346. The most popular air in the whole opera. Caruso's version (H.M.V., D.A.561, No. 2 Catalogue) is technically imperfect as compared with Tom Burke's.

*Bella figlia dell'amore* (*Un di, se ben rammentomi*) (quartet—*Gilda*, the Duke, Maddalena, *Rigoletto*). I prefer the H.M.V., D.Q.100 record of this, the most melodious quartet in all opera. It is a superb piece of recording, and though expensive (16s.) should be in the collection of every lover of opera. The Columbia version in English is very poor. For a cheap version I strongly recommend H.M.V., S.1562 in the Italian Catalogue, costing only 4s. 6d., sung by Milan artists; a remarkable record at the price.

THOS. A. MOWL.



# THE PERILS OF COMPLEATWORKITIS

## By A VICTIM

ATHER having successfully survived a long and varied series of gramophonic ailments, it is profoundly disquieting to find oneself helpless in the throes of a severe attack of Compleatworkitis.

The serious outbreak of this grave malady which has been so prevalent for two and a half years is mainly due to the diabolical work of Mr. Compton Mackenzie and THE GRAMOPHONE. What was merely a mild and weak-kneed complaint in the pre-GRAMOPHONE era has blossomed into a widespread epidemic against which legions of gramophonists in all parts of the world battle vainly. Compared with some of the older diseases (such as Newgramophonia, Multisoundboxitis, Steelysis, and Fibroids) this latest scourge presents elements of grave danger. Failure to cope with it in time has resulted in the complete extinction of many banking accounts, and has been responsible for the death through overwork of more than one official receiver.

I give a few particulars of my own sad case in the hope that it may enlighten anyone who has contracted Compleatworkitis without being aware of it. In 1924 I was laid up with a mild form of Chambermusicitis, which—in spite of a course of "snippets"—became rapidly worse. The acquisition of a string quartet (complete on eight sides of four discs)

afforded me considerable temporary relief. But it was only temporary; I did not realise that the seeds of a more serious ailment had been sown.

In the ensuing month I added my second and third complete works. Even then I did not view the symptoms with alarm. It was not until the important problem of what I should give myself for a Christmas present had been satisfactorily solved by I presenting me with my fourth, fifth, and sixth complete works that I fully realised my perilous position. Taking a firm grip of myself I made desperate efforts to conquer the insidious disease which threatened, if it continued unchecked for long, to land me in the workhouse. In the ensuing three months, by heroic self-sacrifice and unprecedented endeavour, I succeeded in restricting myself to my seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth, and eleventh complete works . . . !

Hitherto, by some miracle, I had never bought a set of records "complete in Art Album with Descriptive Notes." My twelfth complete work involved me in this catastrophe . . . I will draw a veil over my relapses, my sleepless nights, my secret journeys for more complete works, my stealthy returns with them . . . But there are times when I marvel at the strength of that portion of will-power which yet remained to me. For, having virulent Compleatworkitis, I have so far

managed to eschew symphonies! Possibly my incurable Chambermusicitis may act as an antidote to Symphonomania; perhaps it is merely dormant within me and may break violently forth at any moment... At any rate, when I am asked what version of which symphony I prefer, I affect a care-free flippancy I am far from feeling. How can I confess that if I allowed myself a symphony (complete on ten sides of five records in art album with descriptive notes) it would land me into an ever-growing slough of debt and eventually into crime? And until they provide gramophones in addition to the other luxuries the Sunday newspapers discover in His Majesty's prisons it is really not worth one's while to become a criminal.

When Compleatworkitis reigns supreme in one's household anything on less than three twelve-inch sides seems a light, airy trifle for frivolous moments or casual callers free from the

disease. Friends and relatives are very liable to infection—or they leave off coming to see you! I know of neither cure nor remedy for Compleatworkitis. You can preserve some vestige of self-respect in the time when temptation proves too strong for you by resolving to ignore the existence of complete works—not that it is the slightest use doing so, only you will have the consolation of having by the conscious use of your will-power endeavoured to stay the inevitable march of the epidemic. You can also blame the wiles of the staff of THE GRAMOPHONE, but don't write and reproach them, or they will rope you in as members of the National Gramophonic Society!

Meanwhile I have a list of forty-seven complete works I simply *must* have, and my hair is turning grey under the strain. Won't some of you start a fund to buy them? I will gladly offer my services as treasurer.



## CARUSO AND McCORMACK

By PHILIP EDGE

GRAMOPHONE enthusiasts have indeed to be thankful that the voices of both these great tenors have been well preserved for us by the Gramophone Company, Ltd. Enrico Caruso undoubtedly attained more fame and popularity than any other tenor before or since, and John McCormack is reputed to be the only tenor whose popularity approached near to that of Caruso.

It is not an easy task to compare these two artists, for their styles and voices are essentially different. Perhaps to some the comparison may be odious, but I hope that many will find it interesting—perhaps even useful. I have guided my judgment chiefly by the enjoyment I derive from listening to each, and by observing anything in the rendering of their songs which I think affects the enjoyment of the listener, or which is detrimental to the musical value of the rendering.

Like our Editor, I do not believe in bowing down to a mere name. It is perhaps this independence in forming my opinions that allows me to decide without any qualms that I certainly prefer McCormack to Caruso. McCormack to me is the ideal musician; Caruso something less. I do not deny that Caruso had a magnificent voice, and I certainly do not deny that he possessed great volume. That in Caruso's singing with which I disagree is his indiscretion in not restraining his volume; also that he sometimes forces his high notes into a bare shout. This is particularly noticeable at the end of some of his records. In his rendering of *La Donna è mobile* the last note is a shout. (I am quite aware that this is an old record, and do not attribute the faults of early recording to Caruso, but it is clear that his last note is not made into a shout or made to sound forced by the recording.) The last note in his record of *Ô souverain! Ô juge! Ô père!* is overdone, and the final B flat in his *Celeste Aïda* is sung fortissimo, and is marked by Verdi "pp... morendo." I cannot but think how McCormack would soar up to this note, and finish the song in a charming, soft "mezza voce." Contrast with some of Caruso's final notes those beautiful last notes of McCormack in *Ave Maria* from *Cavalleria Rusticana* (adapted to the intermezzo), that charming *Serenade* of Raff, and *Angel's Serenade* (Braga).

The reader must not think that I am saying this because I dislike voluminous singing. I only dislike such singing when the singer appears to neglect musical considerations for the sake of vocal display. I like Caruso's rendering of *Questa o quella* because his high notes, though powerful, are not forced; I also think Caruso's wonderful notes in *Vesii la giubba* finely

dramatic, because then there is a tremendous climax, when the conflicting passions in the breast of the miserable Canio burst forth. Caruso's singing appeals to me most when he sings in the Italian "Bel canto" style, of which he was so completely the master. His singing of *O Paradiso* from *L'Africaine* is an excellent example of this, and I have never enjoyed his singing more than at the commencement of the quartet from *Rigoletto* (D.Q.100). I cannot imagine any lady rejecting a lover pleading in so ravishing a manner.

One of McCormack's greatest assets is his versatility. Admirers of Caruso are apt to forget that he could sing neither Mozart on the one hand nor Wagner on the other. McCormack can sing both these composers, and almost everything in between these two extremes. He can sing everything that Caruso sang, and much more. How inimitable are his renderings of those old Irish ballads! I cannot imagine a more sympathetic or a more artistic rendering of the *Kerry Dance* than his. McCormack is an excellent lieder singer: Caruso wisely never attempted to invade this realm of music. McCormack's records of *Serenade* (Schubert), *When night descends* (Rachmaninoff), *Morgen* (Strauss), are examples of his art in interpreting such music. In sacred music I much prefer McCormack to Caruso. The latter often treats sacred music as if it were Italian opera. I positively dislike his rendering of *Domine Deus* (Rossini). He "goes at it" far too vigorously. In Bizet's beautiful *Agnus Dei* he spoils an otherwise good rendering by too much volume at the end of the record. His rendering of *Cuius Animam* from Rossini's *Stabat Mater* is good; but I venture to suggest that McCormack would produce a better rendering. As an example of McCormack's treatment of sacred music, hear his rendering of *Ave Maria* (Schubert) and *Ave Maria* (Bach-Gounod). Both show perfect musicianship. His evenness of tone, purity of voice, and masterly technique combine to form a rendering as near perfection as possible.

A charge often made against McCormack is that he has recorded much trash. This is undeniable, and some people say that it lessens him in their esteem as an artist. But we must remember that this charge is applicable to many great artists (e.g., Kreisler), and Caruso is one of them. I think little of *Mia piccirella* (Gomez), and less of *Tarantella sincera* (D.B. 141), while two other songs (one Spanish, the other Italian—I forget their names) which I heard Caruso sing were absolute rubbish. In some such songs I find that to an Englishman his rendering is inclined to be vulgar. McCormack never even becomes too sentimental.

I have here stated my reasons for preferring McCormack to Caruso, but readers must not imagine that in somewhat emphasising what I disagree with in Caruso's singing I do not appreciate that tenor's greatness. I myself have derived much enjoyment from the many records of him that I have heard. Indeed, much may be said for both sides. I can understand people preferring the vivid dramatic delivery of

Caruso, and that expression of sadness which he knew so well how to infuse into his golden voice, to the effortless delivery and original charm with which McCormack uses his silvery voice. Both artists are probably the greatest of their kind recorded for the gramophone, and their records, with those of Chaliapine, are the vocal records which have afforded me the greatest pleasure.



## THE SOAP-BOX GRAMOPHONE

By Revd. L. D. GRIFFITH

HERE is a great charm about making one's own gramophone. If you turn to page 22 of the new volume you will see in the picture how easily this can be done. The only difference between that soap-box gramophone and mine is that a portion of the interior of the box serves the purpose of an internal horn or resonator. Half the box and even more can be utilised in this way. The dimensions of my box are 20in. by 14in. by 10in. The single-spring Garrard motor (costing only 45s.) is screwed to the box lid in the north-east corner, so to speak; the spindle of the turn-table at a point 8in. from the side and 5½in. from the back. Exactly in the middle of the box is inserted one side of the horn; a piece of three-ply from a tea-chest bent round from the back to the front so that the whole of the front becomes the unobstructed aperture of the said horn. The base of the tone-arm is fitted to the left of this division and the corresponding side of the horn slightly bends from the back of the box to the front on the opposite side. Another piece of wood or three-ply, carefully measured and cut to fit between the two sides and sloping down to the front, acts as an efficient sound-deflector, extending to within 3½in. of the front.

Before making the necessary six holes in the lid it is very important to plan where they shall be. To this end place the turn-table minus spindle at the point mentioned—i.e., 8½in. by 5in. then arrange your 7in. straight tone-arm with sound-box and Lifebelt attached, and with the help of the Wilson protractor (with a view to approximately correct needle-track alignment) with a pencil mark on the lid just where these ought to be. The hole in the side for the winding-handle must also be located.

As a brace and bit are apt to split the wooden lid it is better to bore the holes with a red-hot poker; one that has seen service and lost its square end. A series of such holes arranged in a circle will produce the larger aperture necessary for the tone-arm base.

A further hole will also be needed for the speed regulator. When your motor is safely screwed into position you will see at once where this should be. On my soap-box this and the handle is in practically the same position as in the picture referred to above, only at the right-hand side, not in the front.

The lid is made to lift off in one piece, being normally screwed to the box, so that it can be removed to oil the motor, etc.

A counter-weight for the tone-arm can be simply arranged with a piece of thick copper wire twisted round the tone-arm, one end of the wire projecting about three inches behind the

base and bent into a hook on which to hang the weight. This can be fashioned out of a piece of lead piping and should weigh three or four ounces.\*

Choice of sound-box is left to the reader's taste, but I am getting delightful results with an Astra No. 1 sound-box with fibre needles. This home-made machine gives a very happy rendering of the N.G.S. and other chamber music records. Vocals and orchestrals, too, are very good indeed.

While one does not pretend that the soap-box gramophone beats all the other excellent models advertised in *THE GRAMOPHONE*, it is exceedingly simple to construct and very satisfying in its results. Mine in particular is much easier on record-wear than any other two machines and runs them very close sometimes in the matter of quality of reproduction and resonance.

But you must be sure to fit a Lifebelt, use a weight-adjuster, and cut back the tone-arm to half an inch from the bend, as well as arrange for good needle-track alignment if you want to make a really first-class soap-box gramophone.

Mine, I may add, is fitted with four wooden legs and stands on four inverted two-pound glass jam-jars, which improves resonance.

A parishioner remarked that the gramophone was a greater wonder than wireless. She was right. From the time I was six and first heard of the man who had invented a box into which one could speak and on opening it again a long time after it would repeat what he said, I have been fascinated by this marvel. Radio only transmits, but this amazing contraption of metal, wood, mica, and wax produces sounds far more exquisite than we (most of us) can do ourselves. With my soap-box I can summon spirits from the vasty deep and make the mighty Caruso sing again. A thousand years hence Macaulay's New Zealander excavating among the ruins of the British Museum will be able to do the same.† Comparisons, I know, are odious, but where, I ask, is your crystal set beside my soap-box.

After spending 100 guineas on the very latest model one doubtless expects something for the money, but—

If you wish to rouse in me  
Wonder, awe, and mysteree,  
Commend me to my soap-box.

L. D. GRIFFITH.

\*I have since devised a better method of supporting the tone-arm, but this answers the purpose.

†Vide "British Archives" in *THE GRAMOPHONE*, Vol. II. p. 418.

# EDITH LORAND

## By ROBERT L. BIGG

THOSE who worship at the shrine of violin music could find no better value than the Parlophone records of Edith Lorand, which this company issue at 4s. 6d. and 2s. 6d. I will say at once that here is the music-lover's El Dorado; a superb, classical artist for 4s. 6d. It seems incredible; it is nevertheless quite true. To say that Edith Lorand is superb is no exaggeration; her touch is as light and delicate as gossamer, as sure as the brilliant Heifetz's, as pure and polished as Kreisler's. She may not possess the consummate gift of Kreisler, but she certainly is a virtuoso of the front rank. In the *Gypsy Serenade* of Valdez (E.10134) we have a fine example of emotional execution on an exquisite fiddle.

Miss Lorand, whose training has been astonishing and complete, is yet a young woman. She was born in Budapest. Her father, who was a director of a large petroleum-refinery, is a Hungarian, whilst her mother, who is an Austrian, and comes of a very old Italian family, is a brilliant pianist, having studied proficiently at the Vienna Conservatoire. At the age of four Edith was already playing the piano, and at that time she showed a pronounced talent for the violin, which attracted the attention of a celebrated Academy Professor. Her studies commenced in the Royal Music Academy in Budapest under Professor Hubay. Two of Hubay's compositions are to be found in her Parlophone repertoire, entitled: *Poème Hongroise* (Nos. 3 and 4, E.10361). They are very beautifully rendered, the No. 4 being a particularly flawless piece of work. One hears the rush of high notes revealed with a remarkable clarity in this disc.

Her first public performance was at the age of six, in Budapest, at a large charity concert. At sixteen she was awarded the Professor Hubay Diploma. On the completion of her studies in Budapest, she went for further finishing studies to Vienna, under Professor Flesch. From here she began her concert appearances, which have taken her through Switzerland, Germany, Russia, Poland, America, and England, and

in each of these countries the critics have been lavish in their praise of her technique and temperament.

One critic in Bukarest compared her with Kreisler and Sarasate. A New York paper says: "Temperament galore spoke from the playing of Edith Lorand. She does not cultivate her temperamental qualities at the expense of technical finish; her tone is large, beautiful, and well-poised; . . . that of a real big Virtuoso." Miss Lorand's exceptional gifts do not lie in one direction only, for she is a fluent linguist, conversant equally with English, French, and Italian.

Her Parlophone list is extensive, and it is a matter of some difficulty to state emphatically which are her finest records, because of the simple expedient that each person's taste differs. I will therefore group her gramophone works in three sections: Popular, Hungarian and Russian, and Classic. Of her popular discs *Valse Bluette* (Drigo), E.10360; *Scenes Pittoresques* (Massenet), E.10274; *Au village* (Gillet), E.10113; and *The Londonderry Air* (E.10202), I unhesitatingly select as the best. In the Hungarian and Russian class are Francis Popy's *Suite Orientale* (E.10439, four items); Lüling's *Indian Suite* (E.10427); Drdla's *Hungarian Dance* (E.10248); Scharwenka's *Polish Dance* (E.10190); Telesfor's *Hungarian Song* (E.10361), which is the reverse side of Hubay's two poems. This has a lovely piano accompaniment and enhances Miss Lorand's flair for playing her native mélodies. Tchaikovsky's *Mazurka* (E.10121) is another interesting item in this class with a fascinating lilt. The classic masterpiece of Edith Lorand is actually a collaboration with Michael Raucheisen in a rendition of Beethoven's *Spring Sonata*, Op. 24, in F, occupying three double-sided 12in. records. Here is an unadulterated piece of sheer joy, the happy freshness of which belongs to Beethoven's earlier period; I commend this to every catholic-minded gramophile. Finally, the Parlophone Company is to be congratulated for the excellency of all Miss Lorand's recordings, the second and third sections of the above of which are worth a place in any library.



# THE STAGE AND THE GRAMOPHONE

## By H. R. BARBOR

INEVITABLY the miracle musical-box which has found so significant a place for itself in the life of the modern community has also proved itself useful in the theatre which reflects that life. In modern comedies and dramas one finds gramophones on the stage as an essential part of the action of certain plays. Theatrical producers have also proved the value of the gramophone for "noises off," and the back stage use of the instrument in productions for the suggestion of distant bands, singing, or crowd effects, is frequent.

There is, however, one department of recording which does not seem to have received anything like so much attention at the hands of the trade as it merits: that is, in the recording of excerpts from theatrical performances of outstanding and permanent interest. The life of a gramophone record and the pleasure to be obtained from it is of almost unlimited duration as compared with the length of run of a good play. But while opera and musical comedy presentations are given this relatively permanent reproduction, in the sphere of the legitimate drama very few such records are kept for the delight of this and succeeding generations.

The general public shows its vivid appreciation of the purely vocal aspects of theatrical art as definitely as it applauds the singing of an aria, a concerted operatic number, or a folk air or comic song. Yet, when one turns to the catalogues of the leading firms one finds only a few more or less stilted examples of elocutionary art—a few recited speeches from the classics, and so forth. These are entirely inadequate as recorded expressions of the living art of the theatre of to-day and as a permanent tribute to the excellence of many of the world's great performers.

There seems little doubt that among discerning playgoers records of the principal items of the theatrical repertoire would find a ready acceptance. The principal competitor of the gramophone—wireless—has proved that there is an eager public for such reproductions of dramatic interest, and it seems a pity that the arbiters of gramophone taste have so far neglected opportunities upon which their rivals have seized with wise avidity. The gramophone has that great advantage over wireless that it gives its possessor an opportunity to make an acquaintance or to revive an impression at

will and at any time. Such records would prove invaluable alike to theatrical enthusiasts, to educationalists, to students of speech and also to amateurs of and aspirants to dramatic perfection.

The great artists of other days have passed away leaving only a tradition, a few paragraphs of inadequate descriptions, as evidence of the great power of their eloquence upon their audiences. Duse and Bernhardt will soon share the laurels of legend with Sarah Siddons and Edmund Kean. Yet now, thanks to the advancement of science and art of the gramophone, we have a method of recording, practically for all time, the achievements of the actor and actress, among which achievements the spoken word ranks perhaps highest.

A few months ago, at the Lyric, Hammersmith, in Nigel Playfair's revival of *The Way of the World*, Edith Evans, a great modern actress undoubtedly destined to fame commensurate with that of those actresses of legend, and Robert Loraine, had a spoken duet which would have made a superb addition to the catalogue of any intelligent recording organisation.

More recently the same actress, particularly in her delicious comedy interludes with Balio Holloway in sundry Shakespearean rôles, has provided equally delightful material. Mrs. Patrick Campbell, Ernest Thesiger, Henry Ainley, Claude Rains (a superb and suitable example of whose skill could be found by a recording of the remarkable monologue in his recent performance in *From Morn to Midnight*), and Irene Vanbrugh; these are a few of the many artists whose notable manipulation of the niceties of our language, whose delicate wit and unexcelled histrionic talent, would undoubtedly prove an added delight to gramophonists. A fine double-sided record could be made of passages from *St. Joan*: for example, Sybil Thorndike's interview with Robert Horton, as the Bastard of Orleans, was full of material, eloquence, and purely auditory enchantment.

The stage as a whole affords equally numerous opportunities to the recording industry. Athene Seyler's comedic *diablerie*, Matheson Lang's rich and powerful persuasiveness, Sir Gerald du Maurier's clean-cut impetuous vitality, the ironical strength of Franklyn Dyall (evident in his masterly performance in *White Cargo*), Delysia's dramatic and comedic skill (inadequately represented in our record lists by song numbers only), Robert Hale's dry drollery, all these assuredly merit and would equally assuredly attain a popularity at present denied them by the short-sighted policy pursued by the recording companies.

It would, of course, be ridiculous to suggest that the drama should occupy so considerable a province of the attention of recording organisations as does, say, grand opera. But, to judge from the enthusiasm of playgoers for a particular star and for certain plays, it would seem that the appeal of the gramophone might well be widened and, indeed, that it might become a vehicle of enjoyment for a new and more or less non-musical public if an attractive list of suitable excerpts from modern productions could be issued. Modern methods of recording have done away with most of the less pleasing effects of the spoken word in reproduction, the later types of gramophone and the employment of the recently acquired recording technique making possible the true-seeming reiteration of the beauty and eloquence of language as spoken by our great players.

The transience of the theatrical performances is by no means the measure of the duration of interest of a record of a suitable excerpt therefrom. There are, of course, comparatively few modern plays which would lend themselves to any extent to this treatment. Yet every year the London stage provides many passages, duets, short comedy scenes and so forth, which should command a more permanent public than the playhouse can give them.

There can be little doubt that the general public could be won to appreciation of such a new departure on the part of

the industry. I have suggested above that such records would be of service to educationalists, for their use in schools would undoubtedly help in raising the standard of pronunciation. To students of theatrical technique again, such discs would be a boon of the greatest importance. There is, however, another less direct and no less significant way in which the systematic recording of histrionic excerpts of peculiar excellence could be of paramount service.

By its very nature histrionic art is fugitive. A picture, a poem, once they are created, exist of themselves independently of their creator. A performance ends, saving so far as the memory of the audience is concerned, so soon as it has had its two hours' traffic of the stage. A great and moving example of histrionic genius has no separate and permanent life. The greatest actor can only pass on to his colleagues and to kindred artists of posterity a tradition or the most rudimentary and obvious figments of his technique. Thus the art of acting, and by that very token, the advancement of the art of the theatre as a whole, loses, with the death or retirement of its great exponents, some important elements of its power. In the cinema and the gramophone to-day the modern stage possesses invaluable aids to establishing, to some extent, the craft of the great histrions. Movement and voice can be expressed and re-expressed by means of the camera and the sound-box. What would the director of the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, or Professor Allardyce Nicoll at his East London School of Drama, not give to be able to hear again and see again those remarkable performances of Edmund Kean, of Shakespeare's Burbage, and of Rachel? I suspect that Charles B. Cochran, who recently delighted London with revivals of his own memories of the song and dance of the old Gaiety and Moulin Rouge, would delight in the possession of film and gramophone mnemonics of the talents of Mlle. Vestris, of Duerow, or of the roaring villains and roar-provoking comedians of the old transpontine melodrama tradition. These, you will say, would be documents of unique theatrical and general interest!

Yet it is equally true that many artists to-day are doing work equally worthy of a place in the permanent history or of collection into some, as yet unfounded, museum of the theatre, and to-day we have the means, lacked by former generations, of establishing such an invaluable collection, so vastly more valuable to posterity than all merely literary records in criticism or eulogy.

It would be to the lasting detriment of the theatre if that supreme aid to its historical statement, the gramophone, is not used to its fullest extent in regard to the leading players of our generation. Moreover, there is little doubt that a lively public reception awaits the initiative of the disc manufacturers who develop the use of the gramophone in this direction.

H. R. BARBOR.

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Perhaps you'll think of me.

#### BILLY BURTON.

(Tenor Solo. Orch. Aco.)

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When you're in love.

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## TRANSLATIONS

(Contributed by H. F. V. LITTLE)

### O DEL MIO DOLCE ARDOR

(Paride ed Elena—Gluck.)

Battistini, H.M.V., D.B. 731, 12in., d.s., red.

O del mio dolce ardor :| bramato oggetto, :|  
*Beloved, for whom I long with passion tender,*  
 L'aure che tu respiri al fin respiro, :| al fin :| respiro !  
*The air thou breathest :| I, at last, am breathing ! :|*  
 Ovunque il guardo giro,  
*Where'er I turn my glance,*  
 Le tue vaghe sembianze  
*Thy charming features*  
 Amor in me dipinge,  
*Love to me portrayeth,*  
 E il mio pensier si pingue  
*My mind conceiveth*  
 Le più liete speranze,  
*Most joyous hopes*  
 E nell' ardor che sì m'accende il cuore,  
*And, in the ardour that so burneth my heart,*  
 Cocco te, chiamo te, gemo e sospiro ! Ah !  
*I seek for thee, call to thee, droop and sigh ! Ah !*  
 O del mio . . . etc.

Bis es in ein Meer von Gnade sank.  
*Till they sank in a sea of forgiveness.*  
 Und : was ist's nun, dass ich traurig bin,  
*And why is it now that I am sad,*  
 Dass ich angstvoll mich am Boden winde ?  
*That I in anguish writhe on the ground,*  
 Frage : Hüter, ist die Nacht bald hin ?  
*Asking, Watchman, is the night soon past,*  
 Und : Was rettet mich von Tod und Sünde ?  
*And what can save me from sin and death ?*  
 Arges Herze ! Ja, gesteh' es nur,  
*Wicked heart ! Come, admit it,*  
 Du hast wieder böse Lust empfangen !  
*Again thou hast conceived a guilty passion ;*  
 Frommer Liebe, fromme Treue Spur,  
*All trace of holy love and holy faith,*  
 Ach, das ist auf lange nun vergangen.  
*Hath now, alas, long since vanished.*  
 Ja, das ist's auch, dass ich traurig bin,  
*Yes, and that is why I am sad,*  
 Dass ich angstvoll mich an Boden winde.  
*Why I in anguish writhe on the ground.*  
 Hüter, Hüter, ist die Nacht bald hin ?  
*Watchman, Watchman, is the night soon past,*  
 Und was rettet mich von Tod und Sünde ?  
*And what can save me from sin and death ?*

### WO FIND' ICH TROST ?

Poem by Eduard Mörike.

Music by Hugo Wolf.

McCormack, H.M.V., D.B. 766, 12in., d.s., red (II., 191).

Eine Liebe kenn' ich, die ist treu,  
*One I know whose love is true*  
 War getreu, so lang ich sie gefunden,  
*And was faithful from the day I found Him,*  
 Hat mit tiefem Seufzen immer neu,  
*Who, deeply sighing, but ever forgiving,*  
 Stets versöhnlich sich mit mir verbunden ;  
*Hath often in His love re-embraced me ;*  
 Welche einst mit himmlischem Gedulden  
*Who once, with heavenly patience,*  
 Bitter bittren Todestropfen trank,  
*Drank from the bitter cup of death,*  
 Hing am Kreuz und büsstet mein Verschulden,  
*Hung on the cross and atoned for my sins*

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